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# A WAYFARER'S LOG

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BY
A. ALEXANDER, F.R.G.S.

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# PREFACE

THE object and purpose of this book is to invite the reader to accompany in imagination, the Author in many wanderings over the open roads of the United Kingdom.

To breathe the pure air, to enjoy the rich colour of the hedgerows; to meet and converse with all sorts and conditions of roadmen; to partake of the hospitality of old inns, wayside cottages, or, if benighted, the friendly hedge itself; to clamber over mountain peaks, over purple-clad moors, over sandy dunes; to explore caves, climb cliffs; to listen to the roaring winds and mighty seas of Cornwall and the West; to realise what a beautiful country is ours and what a magnificent field it presents for those in search of health or holiday; to meet with incidents and adventures, interesting, hazardous or amusing.

To engage with our athletes in exploits. To let off a little blood with more or less happy results, stimulated not by personal vanity, but always for the honour of Old England.

To have pleasant *rencontres* with celebrities in every walk of life, and finally to listen to the dry, crisp humour of self-made philosophers who are not aware that they are humorous. To enjoy

the subtle wit of Scotsmen, and to laugh at the guileless unpremeditated jokes of Irishmen; for after all, is not cheerfulness the saving grace of our country ?

These things form the purpose of this volume, and the author's view of them is not derived from books or based on a theory, but comes from his own actual experience, which has been to him a source of so much pleasure and health that he is desirous of sharing it with the reading public.

# A WAYFARER'S LOG

## CHAPTER I

### IN SEARCH OF HEALTH

In these democratic days one is only expected to give an exclusive public scanty information about one's antecedents. To say that you have had a grandfather, and who the grandfather was, amply suffices the most exacting critic. Let me say, therefore, that my grandfather as a young ensign served in the Peninsular Wars, and also at Waterloo.

The family legend about him is briefly as follows: While on a recruiting expedition in County Cavan, Ireland, his squad of men, arrayed in the gaudy colours of an Irish regiment of foot soldiers, with brightly coloured ribbons streaming from their headgear, marched with fife and drums playing through the town of Clones. A carriage and pair, in which were seated an old gentleman and a beautiful young lady, endeavoured to pass the soldiers and the excited crowd which surrounded them. The horses, taking fright at the unusual noise, bolted amok through the crowd. My grandfather ran forward and stopped them, and after tendering his apologies, he was invited to dinner at the Hall some little distance out of the town.

His host had a somewhat strange name, which imprinted it the more on my boyish memory.

It was Mr. Moses Wiggins. He and the lovely Miss Wiggins hospitably entertained and thanked the young officer for his timely service to them. My grandfather returned this kindness by incautiously falling in love with the young lady; the affection was returned, but the father was obdurate and stormy, and absolutely refused to hear of an engagement.

The soldiers, with their young officer, continued their march, and apparently passed out of the lives of Mr. Wiggins and his daughter.

In about a year's time, however, there was an elopement, and the young ensign carried off his bride on board a small fishing vessel to the opposite coast of England, where they were married.

This impetuosity and disobedience on their part was never forgiven.

After Waterloo, it appears that a grateful but impecunious Government exercised considerable red tape in discharging their obligations in paying the salaries earned by their hard-working army. This proved inconvenient to my grandfather, as well as to others. It appears, however, that my grandmother had been educated at Paris, having for a schoolfellow Lady Anne Smith, daughter of Lord Smith, an Irish peer of considerable landed property. Through the interest of this school friend, my grandfather received an appointment on Lord Smith's estate, now held, I understand, by Lord Barrymore.

My father was the eldest son of this marriage, and at an early age entered the Navy, filling in due course the position of chief carpenter, which, on a wooden ship of war, would be equivalent to that of chief engineer on one of our modern battleships. With the advent of the latter, my father left the Navy and settled at Liverpool, where the majority of our family were born.

I have been credited with a retentive memory, and have often surprised people by recounting from personal experience, events which happened in 1855, when my age could only have been three years, and I certainly remember the anxieties of the Crimean War, and the horrors of the Indian Mutiny. I distinctly remember the hot summer of that year, and the trepidation caused to us children by the fact that there was a big comet in the sky, whose tail, so our elders informed us, might possibly touch the earth, in which case we should all be frizzled up !

I also remember that the popular idol of the day, whose name was in everybody's mouth, and whose books were in every bookseller's window, was Charles Dickens. When a new book of Dickens' came out, the shop windows were covered with their familiar binding to the exclusion of everything else ; one of the books would be opened so that the public might read a tit-bit page. The small crowd waited for their turn to read this, and would always come away from the window with a bright smile or merry laugh.

For the benefit of my lady readers, if I have any, I must mention that when I was about six years of age, I remember entering one of the West Derby buses. I was following a lady who was holding her crinoline in an oblong position, so that she could enter the bus, when suddenly she either released, or it accidentally released its temporary contraction ; at any rate, it flew out into full voluminous expansion behind, giving me a very nasty scratch on the face, and causing the male passengers of the bus to utter bad language.

About the same period, my parents took me to visit my Uncle George, who was captain of a large clipper ship—*The Star of the West*—trading between Liverpool and Philadelphia. It was

lying in the Nelson Dock, and while they were at dinner I was placed in the charge of a negro, who did his best to amuse me, but when his observation was off me for a moment, I fell over the side of the vessel into the dock. I was afterwards told that the negro called lustily out that the young massa was overboard. They all rushed up from the cabin, and my uncle, being a strong swimmer and a man of powerful physique, instantly dived overboard, and after a little search, I was found and rescued. I can remember being put to bed so that my clothes might be dried, and I also remember that the negro received a rope's end from my exasperated uncle.

My brothers and sisters appeared to be all very delicate, and I the weakest of them all. My health, in fact, gave considerable anxiety to my parents, and everybody foreshadowed for me an early funeral. This seemed quite probable at one time, for I had a playmate who had contracted typhoid fever, and in spite of the threats and warnings of my parents, I secretly paid him visits, contracted the fever myself, and was lost for two days to my distracted father and mother, who searched the town for me. I was ultimately found in a fever hospital. The matron stated that I had gone there myself, rung the bell, and when they went to the door they found a small heap of typhoid fever without any clue of identity beyond a small pocket-knife and some marbles in my pockets.

After my convalescence I pined in exceedingly delicate health for some time. Every one thought my days were numbered. Old Dr. Pennington, our family physician, however, advised my parents, as a last resort, to consult John Hulley, the famous Gymnasiarch and great Liverpool health apostle, who was stirring all Liverpool with his new theories

of muscular Christianity. I was taken to this remarkable man, who quite awed me by his fine presence. He had the body of a Hercules and the head of an Apollo. By some he was considered eccentric, but all acknowledged him to be the greatest athlete of his time. He it was who offered to fight Tom Sayers, England's champion pugilist, he who walked from Liverpool to London, swam across the Mersey several times, raised himself from the ground with one arm, lifted prodigious weights, and performed various other remarkable feats which attracted hosts of admirers, and gave him a unique reputation.

In 1862 Mr. Hulley had persuaded the Liverpool public to build for him the largest gymnasium in the world, and to this building, then not quite finished, I was taken for the momentous consultation. He sounded and tested me all over, remarked that I was very puny, but expressed his belief that I would make a good subject for him to demonstrate his theories upon, and finally, with this object in view, offered to take me as an apprentice. Thus, at an early age, about ten years, I commenced my career as an athlete.

Mr. Hulley was faithful to his promise. Every morning I had my cold bath followed by systematic exercises, until my parents declared that I was growing visibly. Not only did Mr. Hulley train me physically, but he aroused my boyish interest by teaching me various feats of gymnastics, fencing exercises, etc., that made me quite the envy of all my boy friends.

The gymnasium was to be publicly opened by Lord Stanley in 1863, and Mr. Hulley was anxious to have some exponent of the various apparatus with which the building abounded, thus accounting for the care and perseverance which was bestowed upon my training.

Before the formal opening of the gymnasium, Mr. Hulley had engaged a staff of professional teachers who at that time were at the head of their profession, and whose names now are a tradition in the athletic world. Our boxing master was James Mace, champion pugilist of England, our fencing master, Andre Durbec, the famous Parisian maître d'armes, our wrestling masters, R. Irving and J. Becton, champions from Cumberland. We had other teachers in other branches of gymnastics, drill, swimming, and athletic games, all men at the head of their profession.

I was now handed over to these teachers, who did their best with me, so that by the time of the opening, although only about one year had elapsed since I first joined the gymnasium, my training was already showing signs of de-devopment, and I believe I was considered by the critics to be a "lively nipper."

Speaking of nippers, I wonder what the nippers of that period would think of the nippers of this period, and *vice versa*. The Victorian nippers, as a rule, took their inspiration of mischief and bravado from the Indian stories of Gustave Aimard, Fennimore Cooper, and Captain Mayne Reid, whereas the present day boys seem to draw chiefly upon the stimulus of the picture palaces. The present generation, however, hold the advantage, inasmuch as they are, owing to the efforts of General Baden Powell and others, much better organised in their recreations and all that concerns the boy's life.

We had Indian titles. I was called "Antelope" on account of my supposed activity, and we would perform melodramas of Indian life to our heart's content. For instance, four small Indians once visited the Princes Dock, slid down

a rope from the stern of a large vessel into a small boat, untied the fastenings, and then visited a buoy in the centre of the dock. On the desolate shore of this square "island" Antelope was marooned, the three renegade Indians paddling off and leaving him to his fate. Unfortunately for the intended conclusion of the drama, the renegades were captured by a Custom House officer, and I was left severely alone on my "lonely island in the Pacific." After staying there for about an hour I was rescued, severely admonished, and sent about my business.

It was a common thing for us small Indians to reach the top storeys of the Albert Dock warehouses by the hydraulic lift, mounted on a bale of cotton or other merchandise. One day I was sent to a cotton-broker's office on the Old Exchange on a message; I was ushered into the private room of the broker to await his coming, when to my great delight I noticed lying in an open case on the table a brace of Colt's revolvers. Picking one up, I peered down its barrel to see if I could find where the bullet came from, then placed it down on the table, when it accidentally went off, doing considerable damage, and making a terrible noise, causing everybody on the "flags" much perturbation and myself some withering comments.

The formal opening of the Liverpool gymnasium was a great success. The hall was packed by the leading families of Liverpool. Lord Stanley, afterwards Earl of Derby, presided. The programme included boxing by James Mace and Mr. J. Taylor, the latter a leading merchant in Liverpool. Sabre *v.* Bayonet, by Mr. J. B. Lee and Mr. F. Page Roberts, the former a sturdy type of John Bull, while Mr. F. Page Roberts, now the Rector of Strathfieldsaye, and

brother to the Dean of Salisbury, attracted much admiration by his fine, handsome presence and masterly command of the sword. These and many other feats by various champions inaugurated the opening of the—at the time—finest gymnasium in the world. It incidentally had a run of great success. It attracted as members all the leading families round about Liverpool, and speedily obtained a reputation all over the world for the excellence of its teaching and the prowess of its athletes. Mr. Hulley was delighted with the success of the institution, and became himself quite a public notability of the town.

"Alexander," he observed to me one day, "I expect a note shortly. When it comes, bring it to me; I shall be on the fashionable side of Bold Street." After a pause, "Do you know which is the fashionable side of Bold Street?" he inquired sharply.

I pondered. "On the side where you will be, sir," I replied.

He stared at me, then smiled. "Quite right," he observed, leaving me wondering why he had smiled.

On another occasion, his actions having been severely criticised in the columns of a Liverpool satirist paper, called *The Porcupine*, he wrote a note, and despatched me with it to its editor, Mr. Hugh Shimmin. I toiled up the stairs, knocked at the door of the office, and handed the note to the editor. He read it calmly at first, then he flew into a passion.

"Any answer?" inquired Mr. Hulley, when I returned.

"No, sir," I said.

"None?" he inquired, in a disappointed tone.

"No, sir," I repeated.

"Did he seem pleased?" he asked.

"No, sir," I again replied.

"Did he give you sixpence?"

"No, sir," I again said: "he threw a ruler at me, and an ink-bottle, and a lot of things, and I came away without waiting for an answer."

Mr. Hulley laughed heartily. "Good," he remarked.

Another incident happened in this year which flattered my vanity and gave me much pocket money. The Prince of Wales, afterwards Edward VII., was to be married to the Princess Alexandra, and the leading institutions of the town conceived the idea of displaying the Danish as well as the British flag from the same flagstaff; but when the halyards were pulled down for this purpose, many of them being rotten, broke, and left the bare flagstaffs, without any cord. Application was then hurriedly made to Mr. Hulley as to the most expeditious way to reeve a new halyard. Mr. Hulley at once promised to send me to climb the various flagstaffs, and pass a new line through the pulleys at the top. This I did at many institutions in the town. Quite a crowd collected to see a tiny youngster shin up these masts, pass the line through the pulley and bring it down ready for service. I invariably got a good cheer from the crowd, and what was more to my liking, many shillings from the authorities.

Meanwhile, the Liverpool gymnasium was growing in reputation. The scientific physical training which it gave, its magnificent fit up, and above all the prowess and strong personality of its director, attracted pupils to it from all parts of England, and even from America. In addition, all the leading families of Liverpool, famous names in shipping, the Inmans, Macivers, Ismays,

Holts, Rathbones, Forwoods, and many others, were in our classes. The *élite* of the medical profession, Doctors Bickersteth, Glyn, Manifold, Pennington, Grimsdale, and others, not only participated in the classes, but co-operated with Mr. Hulley in directing the courses of instruction on theoretic and beneficial lines. Mr. Hulley, too, had the moral support of the leading members of the Church, indeed, many also participated in the classes. The Rev. Nevison Lorraine, now prebendary of St. Paul's, was one of our most enthusiastic pupils, and together with the late Rev. Hugh Stowell Brown, did much, in and out of the pulpit, to recommend the gymnasium to the community.

In the meantime my own training went on apace. Every day I received fencing lessons from Andre Durbec, wrestling tips from J. Becton, and was knocked down at least half a dozen times a day by James Mace, who contented himself by sitting upon a chair on these occasions and inviting us—for his son Alfred, now the Rev. Alfred Mace, had joined me in these lessons —to "come on." We came, we saw, but we did not conquer, for we could never succeed in getting home on the frontispiece of James Mace, for his head twisted, turned, and gyrated in such an extraordinary manner that we were thoroughly nonplussed and were generally knocked down for our pains. James Mace, in the old style of self-defence, was certainly the greatest exponent of scientific boxing of his, or any other, day.

Our drill instructor, a Mr. Neville, a tall, fine-looking Irish gentleman, usually finished up my day's work with "setting up" exercises. These I did not like, and as he also had a violent temper, I was not sorry when one day the police arrived and took him into custody. He was

afterwards executed as an Irish Fenian Head-centre.

Mr. Hulley, also about this time, threw open the gymnasium to all the leading professional artists who visited the town, especially to the members of Hengler's famous circus, the only stipulation being that they should practise between the hours of 8 a.m. and 10 a.m., before the ordinary classes commenced. The visits of these professionals were of intense interest to me, inasmuch as they were most kind in giving me many tips which proved of great service to me in after years. It was from Mr. Eugene Cooke that I was inspired to learn the flying trapeze, and I know of no greater exhilaration than swinging through the air from one trapeze to the other, turning pirouettes and somersaults *en route*. It is the nearest approach to flying through space that I have experienced.

From a Spaniard named Permane I mastered backward and forward somersaults. From a Brazilian named Don Jose Manuel I learnt to walk the slack wire. From the great Ethardo I acquired the art of walking on the running globe, while Blondin, the famous rope walker, who walked across Niagara Falls, very kindly imparted the secrets of his art to me, to such an extent that I could walk across almost anything of narrow dimensions, and once I terrified the visitors to the gymnasium by walking across the narrow beams and iron guy rods close to the roof. All these practices gave me nerve and helped to co-ordinate mind and muscles.

It must not, however, be assumed that I obtained proficiency without some damage to my person. Seldom a day passed without my being "laid out."

One morning I was very keen to learn a certain

somersault from a horizontal bar which had been shown to me by one of the professionals. I confided my ambition to the Rev. Nevison Lorraine, who was an enthusiastic athlete in those days. He suggested that it would be a great achievement if I could only accomplish my object, and promised to look after me if I would make the attempt. I agreed to try. As it entailed some risk to my neck, we both dug up and collected as much loose sawdust as we possibly could and placed it underneath the bar. All was ready. I made a valiant try, but, alas! I neither accomplished my task, nor did the reverend gentleman catch me, and I became submerged in the sawdust beneath. From this I was dug out, and Mr. Lorraine took me to the lavatory, where a plentiful supply of water cleared the sawdust from my eyes, nose, ears and hair.

When Mr. Hulley heard of this incident, he gave me a lecture upon the foolishness of break-neck gymnastics, as he called it, and consigned me to two hours a day study at Huxley's elementary physiology.

## CHAPTER II

### A MIDNIGHT TRAMP

About this period we had a small excitement at the Liverpool Gymnasium. A large crate had arrived from Paris, and I was very much interested in the mystery of its contents long before it was opened; but on one eventful afternoon, our porter, Sergeant-Major Fearns, brought his tools, and in the presence of a large number of gentlemen, comprising the principal doctors and business men of the town, opened the crate.

A brand new velocipede, the first the visitors had ever seen, was brought out. It had two large wheels, with thick wooden spokes and iron rims and tyres. The body was made of thick, heavy ironwork, with fanciful bent iron patterns on the front and rear. It had a straight handle, elaborate saddle, and treadles of three sides of triangular wood. It was touched up here and there with gaudy colours of paint, and must have weighed at least two hundredweight.

After being explained to the company by a Frenchman, who apparently owned the machine, I was placed upon the saddle, my legs dangling in the air. The machine was then pushed off, keeping its balance by its own momentum. The Frenchman meanwhile ran by its side, increasing, by slight touches, its failing speed, and volubly explaining its merits all the time. He afterwards, to my great relief, lifted me off the

saddle, and mounting himself, rode around the large hall, to the wondering surprise of all present. I think this must have been almost the first velocipede that made its appearance in England.

About this time an amusing boyish episode happened to me. I had, along with young Alfred Mace, become rather proficient as a midget boxer, and we were often in request to show our ability in this way. I, however, became much concerned at a criticism I received from an old athlete.

"It's all fancy work, yours," he said, "and in a stand-up fight with any town urchin you would be knocked out of time before any one could say Jack Robinson."

This depressed my youthful soul very much, and I determined to put it to test.

One winter's evening, therefore, I bent my steps towards Scotland Road, one of the roughest districts in Liverpool, and turning down Burlington Street, another very rough quarter, I passed a number of corner boys who were engaged in horseplay outside a public-house. As I passed, I felt a wet, nasty headgear strike me on the back of the neck. This was my chance, and turning round, I addressed them in somewhat pompous language.

"If you boys will make a ring here, and see fair play, I'll challenge the boy that threw that cap to a stand-up fight."

A roar of laughter followed this speech, and I became the recipient of many jeers and unwholesome advice, conveyed in very bad language. I, however, stood my ground; then, walking up to the biggest boy of the crowd, I made my appeal to him again. He laughed roughly, was going to strike me, and then suddenly he ordered his satellites to form a ring, and calling out the boy who threw the dirty cap at me, asked him to

stand up and give the little 'un a pair of black eyes, and send him home. He was a head taller than I, but untrained, as I reflected, and, moreover, knew nothing about the "noble art." We therefore squared up, and he came upon me like an avalanche. I stepped on one side, giving a good swinging blow on his left cheek; he turned round sharply, ran at me, I again eluded him, and gave him a stinger on the right cheek. He rubbed this cheek, and the M.C. called time. This ended the first round. Meantime the dozen boys or so had become excited, and I was much criticised. Time being called, we again squared up, but my opponent was not so keen in making the attempt, and I peppered in one or two body blows, and while these slightly doubled him up, I took advantage to visit his eyes and nose, at which he appeared very much confused, and looked appealingly at the M.C., who again called "time." Again I was criticised, though this time more respectfully. Two or three boys came up and wanted to know if I was Jim Mace's son; but I waved them off, folded my arms, and in a gladiatorial attitude, awaited my opponent. He did not seem to want to come, but being urged on by the M.C. and some of his friends, he came upon me with a rush, using hands and feet this time. But I evaded both ends of him, and taking him in the flank, put in all I knew, on which he sank to the ground, a convinced, beaten corner boy. I went to him, helped to raise him from the ground, shook hands with him, raised my hat and saluted the M.C. and his tribe, from whom I received a hearty cheer, as I walked on, a youthful conqueror, victor of my first fight.

When I informed James Mace of my triumph, he took hold of my head and scanned my features keenly.

"You haven't a scratch," he said, in a disparaging tone. "Why didn't you get a black eye or two, or something to show for all your trouble? It would do you good to get a little punishment."

Amongst my acquaintances there was a boy whose father was an officer of one of the steamers which plied between Liverpool and Belfast, and as there was a great fête taking place at Ormeau Park, Belfast, he suggested that we boys should go over and see this fête, returning the next day by the same boat. This greatly excited us, and as it was my first sea-voyage, I wondered very much whether I would prove a good "sailor" or not.

As a matter of fact, I proved a very bad sailor, and was glad when the voyage was over. When we arrived at the Park there were thousands of people assembled to take part in various sports, and to witness various attractions. We boys were attracted by a crowd around a very high flagstaff, one of the highest, I have since heard, in the United Kingdom. A large flag was on the ground, but there was a broken halyard, and their trouble was to get a new line reeved through the pulley at the top of the flagstaff. They, it appears, tried all sorts of methods and men, but without avail.

"I could do that," I told my chum.

"Then go and do it," he urged.

"I would if they asked me," I returned.

He at once went to the group of men. "That boy there," he said, pointing to me, "could do it."

But the men took no notice of him. "He belongs to the Liverpool Gymnasium," my chum reiterated, "and can climb anything."

"Well, youngster," one of them said in a joking tone, "you had better come and do it."

I took this for a command, and taking off my jacket, took the end of the line, surprising those present by making a taut bowline knot, and placing the loop around my head.

The mast at the base was far too thick for any one to climb. I could scarcely clasp around it myself, but I had noted that there was an iron collar half-way up the mast, from which were suspended steel guy rods reaching at right angles from each other some distance away from the base of the mast. Going to one of these rods I pulled at it and tested it in various ways, then proceeded to climb it leg and hand fashion, until I reached the collar. I clambered on to the collar, and stood there for a few moments until I got my wind. Even there the mast was fairly thick, so that I could not shin up in the ordinary way. I, however, climbed up the first twenty feet or so in "bear" fashion, *i.e.* with the calves of the legs and the forearms around the mast. The mast then got sufficiently thin for me to "shin up" the remainder. It was a very high pole, and when I reached the top I received quite an ovation from the assembled thousands. I at once took the line from around my neck, untied the bowline, and passing it through the pulley, lowered the line until it reached those below. I then descended very cautiously and very carefully until I reached *terra firma*, receiving another cheer when I did so. Moreover, I received a sovereign for my trouble, and there was a pair of very happy boys that day at Ormeau Park.

After the fête we returned to the ship, and travelled back to Liverpool, I being, as usual, in the throes of *mal de mer*.

The next outing I had was not quite so successful. Mr. Hulley had frequently "lent me" to organisers of charity concerns and bazaars, to

assist in the programme for the evening, thus, as he expressed it, spreading the cause of physical education, and assisting in a good cause at the same time. These demonstrations were quite to my liking. I usually exhibited various forms of physical drill, sword exercises, and gymnastics. These being quite new at this time, were very popular, and I usually benefited in small gifts and much praise.

One day a man of semi-clerical appearance (I have been suspicious of such men ever since) called at the gymnasium, and spoke of a great effort a local committee were making at Runcorn to provide funds for a very praiseworthy object. He mentioned that he had obtained the gratuitous services of several ladies and gentlemen in Liverpool, and the entertainment, which was to take place at the Town Hall, Runcorn, would be announced as a visit by a Liverpool concert party, and he begged Mr. Hulley to assist him by allowing me to take part in the programme. The arrangement was that I was to be conveyed to Runcorn and back, and if the programme proved too late to catch the last train, I was to be provided with supper and put up at the hotel with the rest of the party, returning home early on the following morning. Mr. Hulley consented, and I was delighted at the prospect of such a trip. The first part of the programme came off all right, *i.e.* we were met at Lime Street Station, and taken in hand by the Christian worker. Arriving at Runcorn, we gave the concert to a crowded audience, and as we had evidently lost the last train we waited for the secretary to take us to the hotel, there to enjoy an ample repast and a good night's rest; but the gentleman never turned up, and getting anxious, I proceeded to the front of the hall, but I found

it closed, and the hall-keeper informed me that he knew nothing of the gentleman in question. I waited a weary hour, but as he did not put in an appearance, I was thrown on my boyish resources. I found that I had a penny in my pocket, and there was some luggage to dispose of.

The latter I decided to leave at the hall. I then made my way to the river-side. There was a boatman resting on his oars, waiting to take passengers to the other side of the river at Widnes. There were no bridges over the Mersey in those days. I inquired the fare, he remarked that being a little one he would take me over for a halfpenny, but I would have to wait till the boat got full.

I therefore strolled into the town, and as I was getting extremely hungry, I dropped into a small shop and purchased a sailor's biscuit for a halfpenny, reserving the remainder to pay for my passage across the river. I then returned to the river-side, but it was nearly midnight before the last passengers made their appearance, and we were rowed over in the darkness to the opposite side. I inquired from the boatman how far it was to Liverpool by road. He said about seventeen miles; I inquired the way, on which he stared, and said—

"Thou'rt not going to walk it, are thee?"

I replied in the affirmative. He looked hard at me, and seeing that I was respectably dressed did not associate me as a possible tramp.

"Well," he said, "if thou'rt going to be a fool, that's the way," and he pointed the road out to me.

I made my way quickly along it, but in a short time, and after leaving the town for a little distance, it became quite dark, and I had considerable difficulty in finding my way. This

difficulty was increased when I came to the cross-roads. To my relief, however, I saw in the distance before me a pair of twinkling lights, and soon heard the sound of horse's hoofs. It was a vehicle of some sort on its way to Widnes, and when it came close to me, I must have startled the driver by calling out, "Which way to Liverpool?" I got a muffled "Straight on," and on I went. But it was a weary business, for try as I would, I could not prevent myself stumbling over ruts and colliding against projections. However, I persevered until it became so dark that I felt it would be unwise to proceed any further. I therefore groped my way to a hedge, and having found a dry spot, endeavoured to go to sleep; but the cold rendered this impossible, and every now and then I felt obliged to get up and exercise to keep up the circulation. In addition, I was troubled with a boy's fears about the supernatural noises that beset me. Every tree became a ghost; rustling branches were ghouls and spectres, and the scudding of dry leaves along the road were mischievous imps and pixies. It was indeed quite an ordeal for a boy of twelve, and I was thankful after a very weary night, to see the sky become sufficiently bright for me to make out the shape of the road, and I once more started on my journey. I must have been about five hours on my way, when I came upon a footpath with a signpost at the entrance, with the welcome words "To Liverpool" painted upon it. I at once proceeded along the narrow path, now and then having to cross over various stiles. As I mounted one of these, I saw in the distance a man approach; it was the first human being I had seen since I left Widnes, and my joy was great; but when the figure approached me, I was not quite so elated, for he was a rough-looking man, and his words to me

confirmed me in the opinion that he was a desperado of the criminal type.

"Fork out your money," he said; "look sharp about it."

"I haven't any," I replied.

He uttered an oath. "Hands up," he cried.

I raised up my hands in the approved manner that I had read that Captain Kidd demanded of his victims. He searched me. Oh for my trusty sword, I thought; how easy it would have been to have "pinked" him while engaged in this transaction! He took from me a penknife, and cursing me, proceeded on his way.

"How far to Liverpool?" I shouted after him; but he vouchsafed no reply, and we went on our opposite ways.

Soon the familiar ground of Knowsley and Croxteth greeted my sight, and I arrived home about 6 a.m.

"You must have caught the early train," was the remark of my parents, and this I did not contradict, for my father was in delicate health at the time.

Although this first "tramp" of mine did not end very pleasantly for me, I always regard it with satisfaction, for it gave me a taste for rambling and wandering about the open roads of our country, which in later years I took full advantage of, and I fancy there are few highways and byways in the United Kingdom that I have not traversed; but of this more anon.

After the incident just described, another, to me, important event took place. This was an Athletic Championship Meeting, open to the scholars attending Sunday schools in Liverpool and district. Each Sunday school chose by trial its representatives, and the competitors thus weeded out met, I think, on the estate of the late

Sir William Brown, Bart., the donor of the Liverpool Free Library, at his grounds at Anfield.

I represented Holy Trinity Sunday School, Cabbage Hall, then a rural suburb of the city. I entered for the six principal events, and much to the joy of my parents and friends, won them all. One item was so peculiar and so popular that I will record it here for the edification of school sport secretaries who are in search of a novelty.

This was a "Frog-leap Contest." The competitors had to frog-leap, first over a boy standing 4 feet in height, with his head slightly tucked in, then a boy 4 feet 6 inches in height, another 5 feet, and finally a man standing 5 feet 6 inches. Most of the heights were negotiated by the competitors, until it came to the man, who proved an obstacle to all except another boy and myself. My rival was a sturdy-built lad, and much my superior in height, and as we had both negotiated all the heights placed before us, the committee decided in order to test our activity to place the different heights a few feet from each other, so that we required to frog-leap over them alternately, commencing with the four-foot boy, and finishing with the 5 feet 6 inches man. We both got over this somewhat formidable array of obstacles, and the committee, being at their wits' end, commandeered the village policeman, he being close on six feet in height. My rival tackled the "Minion of the Law" first, but made a mess of it, bringing the stalwart policeman down: he tried and failed again. When it came to my turn I was lucky enough to clear him, and it was this success which secured me the Boys' Championship.

I was quite a local hero after this, and felt very proud of my six medals, all gained in one

afternoon. I valued these mementoes of my boyish success very much, but alas! after a somewhat prolonged absence from Liverpool, my mother, who was extremely good-natured, gave one each away to my boy companions, as a token of my regard for them.

## CHAPTER III

### SOME PROFESSIONAL STARS

I HAVE already mentioned that the Liverpool Gymnasium had become one of the sights of Liverpool, and as that city was the starting point between Liverpool and America, and other parts of the world, we received many calls from the numerous distinguished visitors who happened to be arriving at, or leaving, the port.

The Philharmonic Hall being also adjacent to the gymnasium, procured for us many a visit from its most famous stars. One day I was commanded to perform some exercises before a fair lady, who patted me on the head, and thanked me in a sweet, gracious manner. This was Jenny Lind (Madame Goldschmidt), the famous singer. On another occasion I was ordered to give chest exercise to a rather stout woman, from whom I received surreptitious gifts of pocket money. This kind lady was the famous Madame Titiens, of opera fame. She afterwards attended our ladies' class, and delighted the pupils by graciously consenting to sing for them, which she did in a most homely fashion, playing her own accompaniment.

About that time, also, two bright, good-looking boys attended our children's class. We became great companions, and were especially keen on cricket, which we practised by placing three Indian clubs on end, using a soft ball to

bowl with. These boys were very smart, and afterwards rose to great eminence in the athletic world, one being Allan Steel, who afterwards captained the English team against Australia. The other, Thomas Cottingham Edwards Moss, afterwards rowed in the Oxford crew, 1875–8, and won the Diamond sculls at Henley, 1877–8.

One day I was sent to the old Liverpool Amphitheatre, now the Court Theatre, then under the management of Mr. Copeland, to give fencing lessons to the actors. I should say I was about the smallest and youngest maître d'armes on record, but being a sharp "nipper," I think Mr. Hulley (he was a little eccentric) took a delight in placing me in awkward situations. I remember the actors being highly indignant at what they considered was an affront to themselves, but after a fencing bout with one of them, in which my opponent came off second best, they graciously condescended to measure swords with me, and frequently did so after this. At this theatre I met most of its visiting stars, including Mr. Barry Sullivan, Mr. H. Irving, afterwards Sir Henry Irving, Mr. J. C. Cowper—these two latter were, I think, members of the stock company—and many others.

I was much impressed about this time by the stories I used to hear about the old Amphitheatre actors. One related to Mr. Warner, who, after uttering the sentence in the "Stranger" commencing "there is another and a better world," fell dead on the stage. Another related to Mr. Vandenhoff, who, besides being an excellent actor, was very fond of taking strong drinks, and for this object was always endeavouring to obtain portions of his salary in advance. As this was refused him, he one evening absented himself from the theatre. The management were

becoming alarmed at his absence; messengers were sent to the leading "publics" and hotels which he was wont to visit. A messenger, however, from a neighbouring pawnbroker intimated that he was safe on their premises, in pledge for the sum of ten shillings; and going there, the manager found Mr. Vandenhoff ensconced on a shelf, duly ticketed, and with a bottle of his favourite beverage alongside him. He was taken in charge, and a short time afterwards was delighting his audience by his histrionic gifts.

One day I saw our director talking to a gentleman wonderfully like himself as far as features were concerned, but he possessed a deep-set pair of eyes and a noble forehead which could never be forgotten by any one who had once looked upon them. This was Charles Dickens, the novelist, who happened to be giving his readings that evening at the old Theatre Royal, now an ice storage depôt. I went through my usual evolutions, which seemed to interest our visitor very much, and for which I obtained some compliments.

We had a similar visit from another notable man, who, after my exercises, spoke very kindly to me. This was Charles Kingsley, then Dean of Chester. I shall never forget the keen vivacity of his face as the details of the work were explained to him.

Another very pleasant and popular visitor to us, who took some notice of me, was Thomas Hughes, the author of "Tom Brown's School-days." He occasionally distributed our prizes, and delighted every one with his free, outspoken and manly utterances.

Mr. Hulley occasionally had late suppers with some of his friends after the work of the evening was over. They commenced about 11 p.m., and

did not finish till the early morning. I dreaded these occasions, for it was part of my duty to see them off the premises. One evening Mr. Hulley was entertaining to supper Mr. Edmund Yates, then editor of *Temple Bar*, and Sir John Johnes, K.C.B., an old Crimean hero, and as this gentleman had been interested in some of my personal exploits during the early evening, I was invited to join them. It was my first "all-night sitting." The first part, to my boyish experience, was enchanting, the splendid supper, and the conversation about men and things being much appreciated by me. Many times they came down to my level and chaffed me considerably, but later on, when the corks commenced to fly, the conversation degenerated, until at last it became noisy and their sentences of the riotous order. My eyes were heavy; I was no longer interested in their conversation or behaviour, so, choosing my opportunity, I stealthily left the room, retired to a distant dressing-room, where I rolled myself in a rug and went to sleep.

One of the most charming visitors we had was Mrs. Kendal, at that time Miss Madge Robertson. Nothing could exceed her healthy spirits and bright manner, a charm which everybody knows she still retains. She seemed much interested in everything that Mr. Hulley pointed out to her, and I still recollect her merry peals of laughter at some of the explanations. Suddenly Mr. Hulley called out—

"Alexander, show Miss Robertson how that man broke his neck the other night."

This had reference to a professional acrobat who met with this misfortune at one of the places of amusement in the town. Miss Robertson looked serious and protested; I, however, performed the backward somersault from the

flying trapeze quite safely, much, I think, to our charming visitor's relief, for she insisted that I should do nothing else, thanking me very graciously for what I had shown her, and strongly advising me to avoid such dangerous feats, etc.

Mr. Hulley, although outwardly antagonistic to somersault throwing, was, I believe, secretly enamoured of them. His physique, however, was too much of the Herculean pattern to allow him to achieve any success in that department.

One day, while deep in the mysteries of splicing a rope, in which our old rigger, Job, was instructing me, I received a summons from Mr. Hulley, and found him in the large hall with a well-set young gentleman attired in undress naval uniform. I was ordered to climb a rope to the roof of the building, to clamber up the rigging, scale the fort, throw somersaults, and various other evolutions. I was then called forward, and formally introduced to Prince Alfred (Duke of Edinburgh), who felt my muscles and asked me many questions about the technique of my work, especially in rope climbing. He appeared very pleased with his visit, and gave me a good-natured hand-shake on leaving.

Another notable visitor, though of quite a different type, was P. T. Barnum, the famous American showman. He seemed very interested in all that he saw, and would, I believe, have made an offer to convey the gymnasium and all it contained straight away to America, if such a thing were possible. I performed all my fancy feats for him, and in the end he made an offer through Mr. Hulley for me to return to America with him at a handsome salary for a term of years, which I refused.

About this time I received, also through Mr. Hulley, the offer of an appointment to

Edinburgh University; but this, too, after mature consideration, I decided to refuse. I felt that I was too young to undertake so much responsibility, and also that my physical training was not quite completed, so I stayed on, developing rapidly, and assimilating all the knowledge and experience in theory and technique that I possibly could from my teachers. There was a great demand for physical instructors, with apparently no supply, except old-fashioned drill sergeants, who were available after leaving the army; but the authorities all over the country were now becoming alive to the importance of the subject. Many applications were made to us for information, and I was sent to give demonstrations to many parts of the country.

One of my first visits was to Portsmouth, and as it entailed my passing through London, I was much excited over the prospect of seeing the "Metropolis," and wondered how much I could see in the brief time I had at my disposal. In those days the train from Lime Street, Liverpool, was pulled up from a very dense, suffocating, smoky tunnel by a wire rope attached to a windlass. In order to avoid this, I joined the train at Edgehill station, at eight o'clock on a Sunday morning. This was the only train of the day, and as it was obliged to pass through Birmingham, it took exactly ten hours to reach Euston. I was about fifteen years of age, and as this was my first long journey alone, I was much interested in all I saw.

There was not much to see beyond fields, railway cuttings, canals, woods, and distant hills, but they all filled me with a feeling of romance, especially when I observed an old castle like that near Stafford, and my imagination ran riot over all the happenings that must have occurred there in past days. Suddenly I commenced to feel hungry,

and stooping down, looked under the seat for my black bag, which contained, amongst other things, my money and refreshments. It was not there, and I became alarmed; I consoled myself with the thought that it must have been placed in the guard's van along with my other luggage, and at the next stop I ran out and interviewed the guard. He said he had never seen it, but my other luggage was there safe enough. I explained to him that it contained my money and refreshments. He promised to wire back to Edgehill, and tell them to forward it on by the next train to Euston; but later on he came to the window—I think it was at Rugby—and informed me that he had received a reply from Edgehill, and that they had not seen my bag anywhere.

So I arrived at Euston on a Sunday evening, a little after six, when the church bells were ringing, feeling very disconsolate, and very hungry. I again interviewed the guard, who said he would try and get me a return passage to Liverpool, on my promising to pay for the ticket when I reached there, he holding my luggage until the fulfilment of my bond. It meant an all-night journey back, supperless and bedless, and worse, the feeling of having failed in my mission, causing disappointment and inconvenience to others and much mortification to myself.

I tried to reason out what some of the heroes in Captain Mayne Reid's books would have done in a similar situation, and I at once resolved to go on with the journey until I was absolutely stopped. I looked at my luggage piled on the platform; there was a bundle of gymnastic apparatus strapped together, a box containing Indian clubs, dumb-bells, my uniform, etc., and a coil of rope some fifty feet in length; the whole weighing about eighty pounds.

I placed the coil of rope around my neck, the apparatus on my shoulder, and with the box in the other hand, went out of the station. It was a dark night, and when I got to Euston Road I became confused with the hurrying, restless crowds that were passing, the clang of the church bells, and the strange dialects of the 'bus drivers and guards, as they invited you to go to their various destinations. I asked a boy which was the way to Waterloo Station, but he only replied—

"You do look a 'guy,'" and passed on.

After asking other boys, who gave me equally pert replies, I tackled a man.

"Waterloo Station?" he retorted, looking at me under my incubus: "and what's the joke—is it a wager?"

I told him that I wanted to get to Waterloo Station, in order to catch a train for Portsmouth, and would be glad if he would give the information.

"Well," he said, "you're a mystery, you are, with all them things on you;" and pointing a finger in the gloomy darkness, he said, "That's the way."

I thanked him, and following the direction in which he had pointed, I crossed Euston Road, dived down a narrow street, and found myself in an oblong, silent square. Here I was obliged to take a rest. After a short delay, I again proceeded, meeting with fewer people, for which I was very thankful, as I had been more than once unfavourably criticised. I reached another square, and then another, until I thought London must be made up of squares, and I wondered if I should see Trafalgar Square, or St. Paul's Cathedral, or Buckingham Palace on my way, and kept my eyes open, but nothing so exalted came into my vision. It was squares, long, silent streets and tall houses —bricks and mortar everywhere.

Then I came upon a much livelier street, and again inquired my way; I had been going a little too much eastward; I was told that the noisy thoroughfare was Holborn. A finger was again pointed in the direction which I must follow; I crossed Holborn and again plunged into more narrow streets and more squares. In one of these latter I again took a rest, and wondered how it was that with all my physical strength I felt so tired, and came to the conclusion that a dock porter would have carried the things much easier than I could.

Then a horrid feeling of hunger came on me again, and I wondered why boys should be condemned to having such large appetites when there was no means of satisfying them, and I again plodded on. Then the streets became livelier; the people were evidently emptying out of the churches.

I made more inquiries, though very shamefacedly, for I felt convinced from the manner of the replies I received that they thought I should have been at church, instead of perambulating the London streets with a portable gymnasium on my shoulders, but I trudged steadily on, trying to remember the seven labours of Hercules, and what they were, and if mine would prove to be the eighth.

At last I reached a very busy street, and when I was told it was Fleet Street, felt very much interested, and tried to remember all the stories I had heard about Dr. Johnson and Boswell. I felt stimulated, and putting on a bit of a spurt, at last reached Waterloo Bridge. Here I was stopped by a policeman, who questioned me rather sharply. I placed down my luggage and told him my story.

"H'm," he said, doubtfully, "well, I suppose

you are telling the truth. That's the station down there—that big building on the right," and he waved his official hand in the direction.

At last I reached the station, and gaining the platforms, placed down my luggage with a sigh of relief. Then I questioned a passing porter—

"When is the next train to Portsmouth?" I inquired.

"Six in the morning," he answered, and passed on.

Here was a new misfortune. What should I do with myself until six in the morning? It was then about ten o'clock—there were about eight hours to wait. I was tired, very hungry, and commencing to feel sleepy. I meditated what I should do, and decided to go to the end of one of the platforms, where there were very few people, and placing my luggage there, try and get a little sleep. This I did, and in spite of the jangling noises, actually did get some sleep; but about twelve o'clock I was awakened by somebody giving me a kick. Then a bull's-eye lamp was turned upon me, and a gruff voice asked what I was doing there.

"Waiting for the Portsmouth train," I said sleepily.

"Where's your ticket?" inquired the gruff voice.

"I haven't one," I answered.

"Oh, you haven't, haven't you? Then I'll just be off to report you," and he marched away.

In a few minutes he returned, accompanied by an inspector.

"That's him," said the porter, flashing the light upon me.

"Get up," said the inspector.

I stood at attention.

"Now, what's all this about?" he said.

I told him my whole story. The gruff-voiced porter laughed sceptically, and the inspector said—

"How am I to believe your story—how do I know you are speaking the truth? You don't look much like an athlete."

I considered how I could best convince him. There was a sword in my bundle, and boxing-gloves; if I could get these out I might invite him to have a round with me. I looked around for inspiration, then glancing up at the roof, saw the iron girders, with their light iron stays.

"If you like," I said, "I will climb up to those girders, and hang by my toes on one of those iron stays."

"H'm," he said, reflectively, "could you really do that?"

"Yes," said I, "I'll soon do it," and made my way to the side wall to put my plan into execution; but he hurriedly came after me, and placing his hand on my shoulder—

"All right," he said, in a kinder tone, "I believe you. Now what are you going to do?"

"Wait here," I replied. "until the train comes at six in the morning."

"You can't, it's against the rules, so I'll tell you what I'll do. Next door to the station, there is an eating-house, where you can get some supper and a bed, and breakfast in the morning; you be here at a quarter to six, and I'll leave word about you with the next inspector, and he'll see you are all right. Now here's two shillings, that is a shilling for the bed, sixpence for your supper, and sixpence for your breakfast, and you'll have to pay it back to the guard of the Portsmouth train before you can get your luggage. Now we'll take charge of the luggage—off you go, down

there, and turn to the right, first shop next to the station."

I thanked him, and hurrying off, found the place indicated. I partook of the best banquet of my lifetime, and went to bed, listening for a long time to the various clocks striking the hours, and wondering which was Big Ben and Bowbells, and which was St. Paul's.

I was awakened at five o'clock by a hustling young woman, and hastily dressing, went downstairs to breakfast, and was at the station at the appointed time. I saw my friend of the previous night. He was with another inspector.

"This is the youngster," he said, introducing me. "Now, my lad, this inspector will get you a ticket, and when you get to Portsmouth, you must go to your friends and get the price of the ticket, which is six shillings, and two bob that I've lent you, which makes eight. Well, you get eight bob from your friends, and bring it back to the clerk at the left-luggage office, and you will get your stuff given to you in exchange."

I again thanked him.

"All right," he said, "you're a bit young for that sort of thing, that's all," and he walked away.

The new inspector, equally good natured, brought me my ticket, introduced me to the guard, and after a run of about four hours, we reached Portsmouth. Here all my troubles ended, for that time, at least.

## CHAPTER IV

### I MEET GYPSIES

For the next two or three years my experiences were very similar to those related in the last chapter. I attended as a pupil the Liverpool College and the Liverpool Institute as often as I could be spared, but I fear my attendance was somewhat irregular. I was still much in request to give demonstrations in various parts of the country, and did my best to increase my proficiency in my profession. In addition I acquired all the possible knowledge I could in the theory and practice of physical training. I learnt much from many of the professionals whom Mr. Hulley allowed to practise in the gymnasium.

In practising these advanced feats of gymnastics I was aided and abetted by Mr. Dismore, a young barrister, and Mr. T. J. Rushton, a member of the *Liverpool Daily Post* staff, who were equally enthusiastic with myself in attempting these extravagant tricks. The rest of the members dubbed us the "break-neck trio," and whenever we got "laid out," which was pretty often, much enjoyed our discomfiture. A terrible forecast was made of our future, but when we achieved success they did not stint their praise.

This class of gymnastics has apparently gone out of fashion, which is to be much regretted, for although it was not absolutely necessary for the

general health or physical development, yet it developed other qualities: pluck, skill, activity, endurance, and the art of co-ordinating the mind and muscles. These are, I contend, useful qualities for any man to possess, and an army endowed with them would be superior to one trained on "free movements" as at present practised. There was, too, a fascination in practising these feats; it seemed like travelling into the unknown with all its attendant novelty and dangers.

Thus, at seventeen, I believe I was credited with being able to perform more different kinds of somersaults than any professional of that period. I also achieved some notoriety in feats of strength, such as crushing hard apples with one hand, bending pokers, bars of iron, etc., but these were not very difficult. It is really astonishing to what extent the physical strength can be developed.

My friends, indeed, used to nod their heads mournfully over my condition, and misquote Tennyson's lines, at my expense—

> "Lancashire born, Lancashire bred,
> Strong i' the arm,
> Weak i' the yed."

About this time I was requisitioned by the Aldershot authorities to give their instructors a lecture and demonstration. I enjoyed this visit very much, everybody, from General Hammersley to Sergeant-major Tarbotham, doing their best to make my stay comfortable. I think I created some enthusiasm amongst the soldiers, for I afterwards heard of many severe falls and shocks to the system.

Much pressure was put upon me to join the army, it being pointed out that I would very soon obtain a commission and become the director

of physical training to the army. I was very keen to accept this offer, and promised to consider it on my return to Liverpool, but my parents and friends were so opposed to the proposal, that I ultimately gave up the idea, a circumstance which I have regretted ever since.

I now became interested in many of the peculiar professions whose exponents visited Liverpool, and becoming personally acquainted with some of them, obtained from them some secrets of their business, such as conjuring, juggling, electric medium, spiritualistic cabinet, etc. This knowledge has been of some service to me, and a source of amusement to my friends.

Most of the mediums, with, I think, the exception of Mr. Home, were assisted by accomplices, and by devices well known to the conjuring profession. Mr. Home, however, was extraordinarily clever, and many of his feats still remain a mystery. When he visited Liverpool he offered to find a pin placed in any part of the town, providing he was allowed to lead the person who placed the pin where it had been hidden to the spot. He did this very successfully, and it created great excitement at the time.

I have, however, performed the same feat in various houses, by placing my fingers over the wrist pulse of the person whom I was leading; I found the pulsation increased when we approached the object hidden, and slower when we went in the opposite direction. I used to perform this feat blindfolded, as, of course, the sight was not required to detect the rate of pulsation.

When the celebrated American spiritualists, the brothers Davenport, visited Liverpool, they invited any one to tie them up in a cabinet, the

gas would then be lowered, and in a few moments musical instruments would be played within the cabinet, hands which had been previously tied would be seen waving a tambourine above the cabinet; then, when the lights were turned on and the cabinet examined, the Davenport brothers would be found tied with their hands behind their backs, looking quite incapable of having taken any part in these manifestations.

Mr. Hulley correctly diagnosed the secret, which he contended lay in the knots and manner of tying the rope. He therefore introduced a new knot, and determined to try it upon them. When, therefore, on the following evening, the spiritualists invited any gentleman to come from the crowd and tie them up in the cabinet, Mr. Hulley and his friend, Major Cummins, ascended the platform, and securely tied up the brothers; then the cabinet was closed around them, the lights were lowered, but no music was heard, indeed it was some minutes before any semblance of sound was heard at all. Then the instruments were played, the lights were turned up, and the brothers, apparently securely tied, were leaning back, looking a little pale; the ropes, however, did not appear to be very taut, and on examination it was found that they had been deliberately cut. The ropes were held up to the audience, who became very excited, and as the brothers had always claimed "supernatural powers," would not listen to any explanation, and finally, amidst considerable disturbance, stormed the platform and ejected the spiritualists.

Mr. Hulley and Major Cummins woke up the next morning and found themselves famous. Their photographs appeared in all the shop windows, and the Hulley and Cummins knot, made of gold wire, became the fashionable

brooch and breastpin of the day. The knot, I may remark, is that known as the true lovers' knot, with the addition of two ordinary ties by the two suspended ends, the loops being thus rendered incapable of expansion.

To achieve success as a medium for finding hidden articles, a knowledge of wrist pulsation and physiology of movement is necessary, and to perform the "cabinet mystery" one must be well acquainted with various kinds of knots, and if they themselves are being tied, must sit as near to the front of the chair as possible, so that they may be able, when the lights are turned down, to alter their position, and sitting well back close to the back of the chair, slack the entire system of the binding ropes. This enables them to take their arms out to perform the manifestations, and afterwards to re-insert them, then bringing the body once more to the front of the chair so that the ropes may be again made taut.

It is a curious coincidence that Mr. Home, the most successful medium we have known, and Professor Anderson, the greatest of wizards, should be both Scotchmen. I presume that the same caution which prevents Scotchmen from writing love letters, and the same perseverance which create their "Carnegies," are equally necessary for proficiency in the cases I have quoted.

About this time I had a run of bad accidents, the most serious of which was the breaking of my arm, the day before an important contest in which I was a competitor. Dr. Miller pronounced it a bad break, and prophesied that my future profession would be upon an office stool. The main sinews were so damaged and contracted that he declared that my arm would in

future remain at a right angle; but I was a disbeliever, and in order to keep my other arm up to its development, secretly kept a small dumb-bell in the bed, which I assiduously used.

At this time, when we are all abusing the Germans, I remember with gratitude the kind attention which Mr. Klein, the German Consul, and his daughter, Miss Klein, paid me. Every day they visited me, and brought something to make me forget the monotony of bed. When I recovered, my arm, as Dr. Miller had prognosticated, was at right angles, and I could not straighten it; but Mr. Hulley had it rubbed with raw palm-oil each day, and when I walked about town I carried a small dumb-bell, gradually increasing the weight, until eventually the arm became straightened.

No sooner was my arm better than another misfortune happened to me. This was a very severe sprain of the right knee, and as I was obliged to use a stick and crawl about, I represented to Mr. Hulley that I was no ornament to the gymnasium, and he gave me three months' leave of absence.

As I never cared for idleness, I called at the office of Messrs. Bibby and Sons, the well-known shipowners, and obtained employment as a junior clerk in one of their wooden huts at the Huskisson Dock. I detested the work, my only consolation being during the dinner hour, when I had a friendly contest with the dock porters in feats of strength, etc., in which I much surprised them, my work seeming so much at variance with my somewhat delicate appearance.

Yet another misfortune, this time not confined to myself, but to the gymnasium itself and all those who attended it. This was the awful calamity of our chief having dared to fall hopelessly

in love with one of his pupils, the daughter of a leading shipowner. When he asked for the parental consent he was, as the novelists say, spurned from the door; but a week or two afterwards, Mr. Hulley, by means of a rope to the lady's chamber, made a midnight elopement, and all Liverpool was astounded.

The gymnasium received the full force of the shock, and for some time afterwards it was considered exceedingly unfashionable to enter its doors.

Added to this I had the misfortune to lose my father, after a long and somewhat painful illness. We were very much attached to each other, and his memory has always been a stimulation to me in achieving success. When I bent down for a race, I felt his eager glance upon me, and it invariably led me to victory.

Thus at an early age I had the responsibility of a widowed mother and young brothers and sisters placed upon me, and as the doors of the gymnasium were temporarily closed, it behoved me to be up and doing. I first made application to the education authorities at Liverpool; but they replied that they considered the subject quite unnecessary, a mere plaything, for which they did not feel inclined to pay. I next interviewed the military authorities, but they also would have none of it. Evidently the gymnasium and its work were under a cloud; so easily is fashion and society offended.

There was no alternative left for me but to leave Liverpool, and try my fortune elsewhere. I determined, therefore, to visit the various military towns and rely upon forming fencing classes amongst the officers in the army or volunteer force, and also to use persuasion on the educational authorities whenever I could. I

found I had undertaken no easy task, for all these authorities seemed to be influenced by fashion. As one officer observed to me—

"It's a big fag, taking on anything new; but when it is included in the regulations, or becomes the fashion, then the thing will be taken up like wildfire."

Nevertheless, I persevered. My plan was to send my luggage on to a town where I intended to visit, and if I was not pressed for time, I walked the journey. This latter proved a great pleasure to me. The fresh air, the smell of the hedgerows, the noonday repast, the rest by the roadside, and occasional gossip with wayfarers, were a happy experience, filling me with delight, and recompensing me for many other drawbacks which I had to encounter.

I found it quite a different world from that of the town, so free and full of liberty, so natural, so little of the artificial, that I felt I would like to live on the road without again setting foot in a town. I commenced to familiarise myself with the trees and hedges, and wild blossoms, and wild little creatures that darted across the road at my approaching footsteps. Above all, I noted with pleasure the different songs of the birds, and longed for them to come near me, that I might pet and converse with them.

I had conversations with many a wayfarer whose philosophy and speculation were a new book to me. Being strong and athletic, with a good knowledge of self-defence, I no longer feared the rough tramp and his kind. They all commenced their conversations with an appeal for money: that seemed natural to them; but when this was over, many of them proved tolerable and interesting.

Two or three tried to be rough to me, but I laughingly told them I was a pupil of James Mace, and the name seemed to have a powerful effect upon them. But these "weeds" of the road, on the whole, were very entertaining, with a strange philosophy of their own.

"I like liberty," said one to me, "no bossing; that's why I tramp. A day or two at a time is enough work for me, enough to fill my bunkers and get along."

He was a man of about forty, brown eyed and brown faced, the latter not too clean. His clothes were coarse and did not match. He carried a very small bundle, and his only companion appeared to be a clay pipe which he smoked incessantly.

"But," I said, "you must come to a town sooner or later, and what then?"

"If I have to, I have to," he admitted, "then I goes to the Corporation doss, where I get a bath and a sleep. The food's not worth talking about, and I have to work for it. I don't often trouble towns," he continued, after a short silence and a vigorous puff at his pipe; "you can always keep outside 'em, if you know the ropes." He walked on stolidly.

"Well," I said, "I differ from you; I like work. It's a great privilege, I think, to be able and willing to work—besides, it's the duty of every one."

"You're a young 'un, and don't know what you're talking about," he interrupted. "If you're fond of work, go in the town and stay there, and leave the road to the likes of me."

"But," I urged, "if you don't work—— "

"I do work, when I wants to; I know places where I can always get a day's work, at a farm or summat. Now that's your road, and this is mine."

We had come to a forked road. He jerked his head in the direction I had to take, and with "So long," proceeded on his way.

For some time I walked along a beautiful wide road, with a vacant expanse of grass at either side before the hedges were reached. Was it not King John who was responsible for these no-man's plots of grass which adjoin many of our main roads?—widening the roads to give his peaceful merchants time to draw their swords against the murderous attacks of the cut-throats who infested them. In any case, they are now a great boon to the traveller, as they are about the only places on the road where one is able to rest or picnic without fear of being prosecuted to the "utmost rigour of the law."

I rested at full length on the emerald green pasture, admiring the flowery banks which lay under the hedges, and marvelled at the thickness and solidity and beauty of these hedgerows. The hawthorn appeared to be the foster-mother for the orphan children of other trees: the oak and chestnut, the birch and beech, all found their resting-place there, with blossoming creepers and wild rose, honeysuckle, and "traveller's joy" clambering over them, with clumps of prickly holly and promises of hazel-nuts here and there.

It appeared to be a heavenly paradise for birds. Tiny tits of various hues, graceful and chattering sparrows, perky robins, and pugnacious bullfinches darted in and out of their stronghold. On the branch of an ash tree a yellow-hammer was plaintively asking for its "bread and cheese." On a beech an amber-beaked blackbird was engaged in a duologue with a companion in a distant spinney. On an adjacent poplar a loquacious thrush was airing its opinions in rich song,

while high above, a speck in the blue sky, a lark was trilling out its soul ere it descended to its nest in the daisied fields below.

Reclining lazily, with half-closed eyes, I concluded that it was good to be alive, young and healthy and strong, with the world before one. On the open road a pair of magpies were watching the antics of a small loping rabbit. I closed my eyes for a moment, but was soon aroused by a shrill musical piping sound, a vision of gorgeous colour, flaming red, azure-blue, green and orange, whirred past me. It was a living jewel. As the kingfisher sped on its way to the river below, I reflected on the charms of nature, especially if you wait and watch for them.

It is interesting to observe how various animals are influenced by nature. I have walked with dogs over all kinds and conditions of scenery, and have noticed that they only appear to be influenced by a wide expanse, such as a sea-shore and flying gulls, or a moor with a few sheep upon it, which would stimulate their physical energies to effort. They are not at all influenced by a beautiful landscape.

Horses seem to be even less impressionable than dogs, for I have taken them suddenly where a lovely prospect lay before us, and have watched them closely, but they invariably turned to the pasture, and commenced sampling the grass.

Children look at landscapes from a hide-and-seek point of view, and older children for the opportunity of climbing which it gives. As for the grown-ups, the artisan sniffs and feels a contrast between the air there and his bricks and mortar environment of the town. Country folk who live amongst landscapes seem to regard the amount of rain or sun as the principal factor

in their surroundings. Women are more impressionable, and speak of the landscape with artistic taste, as they would of a gown or a hat. The city man likes the fresh air, but persists in talking about sport, shares, or politics. When both sexes arrive at a landscape, they seem to challenge each other to a critical dissertation and analysis of its beauties.

But I must not moralise; after all, there will always be the exceptions to any general rule.

I proceeded on my journey, meeting with very few travellers on the road. We for the most part stared at each other and passed on in silence, but the older men gave me a "good day," which broke the monotony. I have always been foolishly reticent about asking questions of strangers, preferring to reason and find out the matter for myself. On this occasion it got me into trouble, for when the evening advanced and the shadows commenced to fall, I found myself in the unenviable plight of not knowing my whereabouts. No distant steeple met my view, and there was no one to tell me the way.

I remembered having passed cross-roads, and must here have made my mistake, for the road I was now on showed patches of grass growing upon it, a true sign of solitude. I clambered partly up a tree, but did not get a clear view of any extent, excepting in the road I had already traversed. The shadows were falling deeper, and I had almost made up my mind to a night in the "open."

This prospect was not inviting, as having sent my luggage to Marlborough, the next important town at which I intended to touch, I was only lightly clad for walking purposes. I therefore determined to make another effort to reach some

hamlet or farmhouse, where I could put up for the night, so put on what athletes would call a "harrier's trot."

After having covered a mile or two in this fashion, I stopped to listen, when my perseverance was rewarded by the distant barking of a dog. I had not proceeded very far before I came to a bend in the road, when I came suddenly upon what seemed to be a gypsy encampment. It filled up an open space at the side of the road. There were two or three caravans of the respectable type, a couple of fires before them, and the ground round about was strewn with horses, ponies, and young children. Altogether, it seemed a weird sight, and I could scarcely help feeling the old ideas of childhood as to the wicked propensities of these people.

As I approached the first caravan, a dog barked furiously at me. A tall, brown, well-featured man was leaning over a small door, smoking his pipe. I at once went up, and asked him where I was. He told me I was near Savernake Forest, and was some considerable distance from any place where I could put up for the night. He looked at me narrowly, and then, in a cautious and slow tone said—

"You had better have something to eat with us." And as I was getting extremely hungry, I at once thanked him, and opening the little half-door upon which he had been leaning, he invited me to come in. So, mounting a few steps, I found myself for the first time in a gypsy's caravan.

The interior was most ingeniously arranged. At the far end of the van was a curtain which concealed the sleeping accommodation in the Scotch, or cupboard style. The rest of the van was fitted up as a kitchen and sitting-room, all

in one. There was a unique little stove. There were flaps which, hanging by the wall, could be raised up to do service as seats. There was a huge sofa, the seat of which lifted up and revealed a large oblong box. Sockets were in the centre of the van, into which fitted the legs of a portable table. Shelves with crockery were hung up on one side, and a draught-board, with two or three books, on a shelf at the other side. These, with a few photographs of gypsy groups, completed the interior. All this I afterwards observed, for I felt a little excited when I entered.

"Sit you down, lad," said the tall gypsy, in his peculiar, rich, and slightly nasal accent. Then, putting his head out of the door, he called, "Jenny, Jenny," at which summons a pretty young woman came up the steps.

"Get this lad something to eat, and quick," he said.

With no further answer than a stare at me, she rapidly obeyed the command, and in a short time I was sharing with them an evening meal. Theirs was baked potatoes, onions and beer; but mine consisted of a more substantial repast, which included tea, with fried rashers of bacon and eggs. I had, of course, to answer some questions. Who was I? Where had I come from? Where was I going? etc. The gypsy then told me that his name was T. Lawrence, and that he usually kept to the west. He was very curious in ascertaining my views and opinions about things in general, and about gypsies in particular, most of which he good-naturedly scoffed at.

Two little brown-faced children scrambled into the carriage. They stared at me, and one approached. I "threw" a piece of lump sugar through the roof of the van, and afterwards found

it, to his amazement, in the child's pocket. The other small one then approached, and I repeated the "miracle." Lawrence and his wife laughed. The children were ordered to bed, and in a short time they were climbing up to the top storey of their bedrooms, but little heads peeped out at me curiously from time to time.

"Do you play draughts?" I asked, nodding towards the board.

"Yes," he replied eagerly. "Do you?"

"Yes, it is my favourite game."

He brought down the board, and adjusted the men. Mrs. Lawrence brought out some sewing, and admonished the peeping heads.

"What game would you like?" I asked. "'Switzer,' 'Ayreshire Lassie,' or 'Laird and Lady'?"

"We play from this corner, we Romany do, and don't understand any other."

"Right," and we played on. Somewhat to his chagrin, I managed to win.

"Try again," he muttered. "I see you are a champion."

I lost.

"You did not try your best," he said crossly; "none of that with me."

I won again.

"Well," he said, with a small oath, "I'm reckoned the best at this amongst our people, but you seem to know the game better."

I explained that my father insisted on our family practising this game for a short time each evening. "He said," I concluded, "that it would develop our reasoning faculties."

"So it does, so it does; I'm always telling our folks that, but they prefer cards, and they are clever at that."

There was some music outside; concertina

playing, vocal music as well, and the latter sounded well. The air was Tyrolean, made up of harmony and echoes. After a while I caught the words—

> "For there's a maiden dear, I know,
> Amongst the rest she loves me so.
> Oh no, there is no other one
> She loves like me, I know."

"It's the boys and Flossie," said Lawrence, "they are letting off steam; they daren't do it in the towns, so they do it on the road. Now, youngster, I'll see you off to bed."

We rose. Pretty Mrs. Lawrence said good night, and advised me to sleep in a van.

"Aye, you can sleep in the van, or under the canvas, just as you like."

I said I would prefer under the canvas.

"Well, we'll stretch our legs before we turn in. It's a fine night, but there'll be a mist in the morning."

We walked rapidly along the country road, followed by the dog, then back again to a small canvas awning. Lawrence threw some coke on a smouldering fire.

"Clem," he shouted, "this lad will sleep on the Tober, look after him. Good night, boy," and he left me.

The young man placed a horsecloth on the floor inside the covering, arranged a bundle to act as pillow, and gave me another horsecloth to cover me, then with a gruff "good-night," left me.

I did not undress, beyond taking off my boots and loosening my collar, but lay down, staring through the opening at the starry sky and listening to the sounds of the night. I remember hearing the booming cry of the bittern, and eventually fell asleep.

## CHAPTER V

### LOST ON THE MOORS

In the morning I was awakened by the sound of much splashing, puffing, and shoo-ing, as though horses were being washed. I raised my head, and saw one of the young men washing himself from a galvanised bucket. I rose up feeling a little stiff and cold, and at once, much to his amusement, proceeded to go through some physical movements in order to restore the circulation and warmth of my body. The gypsy laughed and asked me what I was doing that for. I told him.

"No sense in that," said he, "it's a waste of strength; you should save all that for work when it comes along."

"Where did you get that water from?" said I.

He pointed over the moor, and, throwing the water away, handed me the bucket. I made off at once, walking for about fifty yards, where I discovered I had to go down a bank to a stream. I plunged the bucket into a pool and obtained my water, contenting myself with washing on the bank, my only towel being my pocket-handkerchief. I then threw the water away, and returned with a bucket full of fresh water for the others to use.

I looked about for Lawrence, in order to bid him farewell, and thank him for his hospitality.

I found him coming along the road carrying a small basket full of mushrooms.

"Well, boy," said he, "how did you sleep?"

"Very well," I answered. "And now I want to thank you for all your kindness to me, and to ask my way to Marlborough."

"Fiddlesticks," he replied; "you're going to have some breakfast with us, bacon and mushrooms, good enough for a king."

"No," said I, "I must get about my work. I have already had too much pleasure, and must make up for it."

We argued at length, but seeing that I was determined, he said he would go with me a part of the way. I shouted a good-bye to the caravan, which had the effect of bringing Mrs. Lawrence, and the two peeping heads in deshabille, to the half-closed door. She also protested at my leaving them. After thanking her for her goodness, I bade her and the youngsters good-bye, and, accompanied by Lawrence, proceeded on my way. He asked me more particulars about my profession. I told him that I regarded myself as something of a pioneer in physical education.

"The day will come," I asserted, "when, instead of trying to persuade people to take up the subject, they will eagerly avail themselves of it, not only individually but nationally as well."

He was sceptical. "You have no market for it," he said: "there is no money in it. It would be better for you to be a gypsy, you would make sure of having a good time then."

I laughed, and admitted that it seemed a very pleasant kind of life, but there was little work and little ambition.

"I have been taught," I concluded, "that

it is the duty of all to benefit mankind by doing good work in whatever sphere they are placed."

"You're a young 'un to talk like that. Now see here, boy"—he stopped short—"what would you say if I had ideas like that? Something here, you know," placing his hand on his breast; "I've had many a talk with Jenny about it, and I tell you what we both intend to do, one of these days."

He placed his hand within my arm, and we continued walking, he haranguing with gestures of his right hand as we proceeded.

"We intend to be mummers. We intend to get a mumming booth together. We shall want, besides our living carriage, a waggon to carry the seats and woodwork, and a box waggon to carry the canvas and properties—quite a small thing at first. I have trained the boys to play the cornet and fiddle, that would do for the orchestra, and the missus and me are going to take the leading parts. We know them all already."

He threw himself into an attitude, and declaimed—

"To be, or not to be; that is the question." And—

> "Fling out our banners on the outward walls.
> The cry is still, They come."

"But," I said, interrupting, "you can't act whole plays by yourselves."

"No; we shall get half a dozen helpers on sharing terms, and we intend to keep to the villages away from towns and railway stations, where the 'Jossers' will be glad to come and see us."

"It sounds good," I admitted, "but it will take a lot of money to start."

"We are saving up for the day. Every horse I buy brings me five or six pounds, and whenever I see a nail on the road, I pick it up and put it in a large box, for we shall want plenty of nails, as we intend to do all the carpentering ourselves."

He stopped and pointed out my way.

"There you are, straight ahead. If you want a pal any time, come to me; you'll be welcome."

"Thank you," said I; "but how shall I find you? You are constantly moving about."

"Write to my nephew, Lorenza, Lion Tamer, Belle Vue Gardens, Manchester. He generally keeps my route."

We shook hands and parted, I feeling that I had met a real man whose friendship was worth cultivating.

I did not succeed very well at Marlborough. There were very few public schools which seemed disposed at that time to take up the question of physical training, either by accepting a lecture or a demonstration. Perhaps my youth was against me, or my objects were in advance of the times. Dr. Warre, of Eton College, wrote saying "that Eton had quite made up its mind not to have physical training," relying, no doubt, upon its games and rowing, yet to-day it is splendidly equipped for physical training purposes. Many of the other public schools followed this lead.

There were notable exceptions, however, such as Cheltenham College and Uppingham School. I think the latter was the first public school in England which established a gymnasium on its premises.

I promised to visit Uppingham, then under the head-mastership of Dr. Thringe. The physical teacher was, I think, a Frenchman named Besigel.

I found some difficulty in reaching Uppingham. I was travelling from the south, there did not appear to be any direct railway communication, and I was obliged to take to the road in order to reach my destination.

As I walked along the pleasant country road, I saw a seedily dressed young man sitting on the grass plot, his feet resting on the roadway. He had a bright, beaming face, full of animation. I inquired my way to Uppingham. He at once stood up, and said he was going there also, and would walk with me, if I had no objection. He told me that he was an actor.

"Not a star, you know," he added ingenuously, "just a beginner doing small parts. All great actors have been obliged to go through the mill in the provinces, and I am now going to join a travelling theatre at Uppingham."

We compared notes as to the merits of our respective professions, he insisting that the stage was a public educator, and I that my profession tended to increase the public health.

"Then," said he, laughing, "we both represent the interests of health and education, but I doubt if the Corporation of Uppingham will be ready to meet us with an address of welcome."

When we reached the town, he stopped and entered a confectioner's shop. There was a good-looking young woman behind the counter. He asked if he might be accommodated with lodgings there, as he had been informed they had some. She looked at him doubtfully, scanning him from head to foot, when he instantly fell down in a fit. The young lady was much concerned, and came from behind the counter to his assistance. I also entered the shop to see if I could do anything. While the young lady went for a glass of water, I loosened his collar, and as I was

doing so, was considerably astonished to see the "invalid" open his eyes, and give me a broad wink.

"All right, cully," he said in a stage whisper, "I am practising my art now."

When the young lady returned he was limp and faint, but after a reasonable time somewhat recovered. He looked round in a bewildered way, and addressing the young lady, said in emotional accents—

"I have just been overdoing it—too much walking—require food and rest."

The young lady looked at him sympathetically, but hesitated; but the invalid gave a heart-breaking sigh which decided her.

"He'd better stay here," she said, addressing me; "the poor young man requires a cup of tea and rest; he'll soon be all right."

"I wish to stay for a day or two; can you accommodate me?" I inquired.

"Oh yes," she said, "if you don't object to a double-bedded room, and taking your meals with this young man."

I expressed my willingness, and followed my companion, who appeared to have suddenly recovered consciousness, into an inner back room. Here we ordered, and were soon enjoying, our tea. When I upbraided the young man for causing us unnecessary alarm, he observed solemnly that he felt it his duty to practise all the emotions and arts under real conditions, and asked me if he had done the thing well. I admitted that he had, and promised to go to the theatre in the evening on the chance of seeing him act.

During our teatime I had observed many of the Uppingham boys coming into the shop. It appeared to be the official "tuck-shop" of the

school. I thereupon went out and commissioned one of the boys to convey a message from me to Mr. Besigel.

When the young lady came to remove the tea-things, my new acquaintance rose up, and, assuming an attitude before her, quoted Scott's lines, "Oh, woman, in our hours of ease," etc., to her, on the conclusion of which he made her a graceful bow, and sat down.

"Do you belong to the theatre?" asked the young lady. "For if you do, don't tell mother: she doesn't like to have them as lodgers."

My companion said that he had heard the announcement with poignancy and despair, nevertheless he felt it his duty to acquiesce.

Later on Mr. Besigel called to see me; he was a foreigner, but very much anglicised. He was most kind to me, and together we arranged my demonstration for the following day.

In the evening I attended the theatre. My seedy friend was playing the part of a rich nobleman, who appeared to be most lavish in his generosity, as he was constantly throwing purses of gold to his needy dependants. I met him again at supper; the mantle of the nobleman had not quite left him, for he spoke to me as though I were one of the lowly, and he one of the great ones of the earth. I shared his bedroom that night, but got very little sleep, for from the bed on the opposite side of the room there came much artificial laughter, sandwiched with groans and cries of alarm, and when I at last fell asleep, he was repeating to himself the duologue between the villain and the heroine in the exciting drama of "Maria Martin; or, The Murder at the Red Barn."

I am glad to see that this young gentleman has at last realised the wish of his heart, for he

is now well known in London, but I do not feel at liberty to mention his name.

After a successful demonstration I went to Cheltenham, and gave a lecture to the Cheltenham College boys. Dr. Kynaston, the head master, occupied the chair. I illustrated my lecture as usual with physical drills, advanced gymnastic exercises, and sword feats, which seemed to be much appreciated by the boys, the head boy and Captain Hodgson, the Games Master, proposing a vote of thanks to me.

I next went to Peterborough, where I stayed at the house of Mr. George Jauncey, who kept a cutler's shop close to the cathedral. The shop was very old-fashioned, having a low roof with timber beams. Much of the cutlery was home-made, Mr. Jauncey having a forge at the rear of the house. In the morning I accompanied him to his work, and assisted him in "striking" the molten metal with a heavy sledge-hammer. He expressed his astonishment at seeing a comparative youth using the hammer so well. Whereupon I took him to the garden outside, and placing a stake three feet long sticking up in the ground, undertook to drive it in the earth with a sledge-hammer in each hand, striking alternately until it was flush with the ground. This I did. He appeared surprised, and on attempting the same feat himself, failed, through being unable to negotiate the left hand.

In the afternoon he took me to the cathedral, he being one of the churchwardens. The vast building greatly impressed me, and I thought that the great front door resembled the castle entrance of the giant in the story of "Jack the Giant Killer." As we opened the small postern door we heard from the far distance the thin voice of a curate reading one of the lessons. I

whispered to Mr. Jauncey that I could not hear what the curate was saying.

"Wait a bit," was Mr. Jauncey's response.

Then presently an old man with white hair came to the reading-desk, and in loud sonorous tones filled the entire building, his articulation being particularly clear and effective. Mr. Jauncey looked on in triumph at my astonishment.

"That," he said, "is Dr. Magee, our bishop."

This famous preacher afterwards became Archbishop of York. The churchwarden took me up some steps embedded in the wall to the side galleries, which we continued to mount until finally we were close to the roof, and from this elevation we heard the choir singing the anthem. It had a novel and marvellous effect; at one moment the sounds appeared to rush past us into space, even to heaven itself; the next to strike us with definite force, leaving us very much impressed with the beauty of its harmony.

I now proceeded to Heaton Chapel, to superintend the erection of gymnastic apparatus at Barnes' Home, a famous Manchester charitable organisation, and also to give a lecture and demonstration to the boys, with some special lessons to the staff.

While there I lodged at one of a group of cottages lying on the way to Stockport. One of the staff of Barnes' Home was my landlord, and from this source many exaggerated stories were spread as to my training abilities, etc.

This had the effect of my receiving a strange deputation, for no less than eight women waited upon me one day.

"Mester," said the spokeswoman, "we've coome to ask thee if thou cans't mak us beat our mesters in a tug o' war, or summat, just to tak consate out o' them."

"It all depends upon the weight," I replied; "if you are heavier than your husbands, I could train you to pull them over in a tug of war."

The women looked at each other inquiringly, and some caustic remarks were made upon the large waists which some of their lords and masters possessed. Then the ladies, altogether, spoke to me about the supposed weight and physique of their lords. I weighed up the evidence, and came to the conclusion that the women would be ignominiously defeated, and told them so. They appeared chagrined. Then an idea struck me.

"Are any of your husbands plumbers?" I inquired.

Seven voices called "Mrs. Jones," and pointed to a small, puny, white-faced little woman.

"Does your husband keep a shop?" I asked of this fair one.

"Yes," she replied, wonderingly, the others all attention.

"Well," I said, "if you can keep a secret, I can make you win this tug of war. I have told you that a tug of war mainly depends upon weight, with, of course, a proper knowledge as to the positions of the body and feet. Now, if you can borrow any artificial weight, such as lead piping, and things of that sort, and secrete them about your person, the lower part for choice, until you are heavier than your husbands, then, with a proper knowledge of positions, you will pull them over."

The women clapped their hands in delight.

The following morning, when the men were at their work, I trained the women, lending them my climbing rope for the purpose, in singles, couples, and fours, against each other, telling them of the great necessity there was in all "pulling together."

"If six pull together, and two don't," I explained, "there are only six pulling. You must therefore pull with a chorus, 'Ye-ho,' like this," and I suited the action to the word. They nodded knowingly.

"I must leave the artificial weight to yourselves, only see that you have sufficient." They laughed again.

For a few mornings I trained them systematically until they became a creditable team. Then, one summer evening, when the men were playing quoits on a piece of waste ground behind the cottages, the women came out, and commenced to play with the rope. The men laughed at them, whereupon one of the women on behalf of her comrades offered to pull their lords at a tug of war. At first the men took no notice of them, smiling grimly and puffing at their pipes. Then the women became sarcastic, until the men could stand it no longer.

"Coome, lads," said one of them, "let's pull t' lasses over, just to plaze them, then they'll let us alone, I reckon."

The men smiled, left their quoits and with their pipes still in their mouths, took hold of the rope. I looked anxiously at the women, but beyond walking rather stiffly, I could see no signs of any extra weight about their persons. One or two appeared unable to reach down for the rope, but they got it somehow, and threw themselves into position. When I gave the word, "One, two, three," the men jerked at the rope with a horse-laugh; but the women threw themselves into what I called the "shock attitude," and were immovable. The men stopped laughing and pulled harder, but the women were solid and smiled.

Then the men pulled furiously and enjoined

each other to pull together; the women smiled once more. Then the men lost their peace of mind. They pulled, jerked, gave way a little, and rebounded with another great jerk, digging their heels into the ground, puffing and toiling with strenuous alarm, until the perspiration poured down their faces.

One of the ladies inquired, "When art going to commence?" Another said, "They want to tire us out fust, then they'll run away wi' us." A third hazarded the statement, "They war a queer lot as could'na pull a lot o' women ower."

Then they simultaneously jeered at the men, scoffed and jibed at them. The men were talking amongst themselves, serious and stolid. Their pipes were put away. They were preparing for one grand effort.

"Now, lads," said Isaac Kay, their leader, a big, burly fellow, "now then, let's run away wi' un."

They made their grand effort, but the women, after receiving the shock, gave the agreed-upon signal, and with a "ye-ho" pulled the men over the line and all over the place, amidst screams of delight from themselves, and muttered anathemas from their husbands, who, replacing their pipes in their mouths, returned to their quoits, much chagrined and mystified.

It is still a tradition in that small hamlet of cottages, how the wives pulled their lords and masters over in a tug-of-war, owing to the marvellous training they received from quite a young trainer.

Shortly after this I went into Yorkshire, visiting most of the principal towns. I found Yorkshiremen not quite so sympathetic as Lancashire men. They struck me as blunt and brusque,

called a spade a spade, and were keen over a bargain. As one of them observed to me—

"A Scotchman may 'do' a Jew, but it takes a Yorkshireman to 'do' a Scotchman." And, indeed, I have seen it stated that the late Sir John Leng of Hull was the only Englishman who ever succeeded in taking money out of Scotland.

I think the climate has a great deal to do with the formation of national character, and was soon to experience some rough treatment from the weather in Yorkshire. One Sunday morning I found myself at Pickering, a little country town on the edge of extensive moors. I wished to get on to Scarborough; there were no trains, and the roads were reported very bad. I was advised to walk eastward for about five miles, then cut across the moors to the south, where I would strike the road from Malton to Scarborough, the distance being about eighteen miles.

As I started on my journey, I saw a young man walking ahead of me, and hurrying my pace, I spoke to him, and asked if he was going far. He was a well-made man, rather wiry, with a fresh complexion, and carried a small package, strapped on to his back.

"I am making for Scarborough," he said, "there's no train to-day, and I am bound to be there first thing in the morning to get in my rounds."

I told him I was going there also, and asked him if he was a "commercial."

"Yes, that's my business. What is your line?"

"Nothing so good as a commercial, and I expect you would make fun of me if I told you."

"Well, out with it: so long as you're not a

traveller in the same line, I might be able to give you a tip or two."

"My business," I said, "is physical training, including fencing, boxing, wrestling——"

"Oh, I say, you're a dead horse, you are, or you're trying to have some fun out of me—why, you're only a youngster. As for fencing and boxing, I reckon you couldn't stand up to many in this county."

"I have stood up to some already, and am prepared to stand up to anybody if they pay my fees."

"I'm your man, if you don't get any one else; but not to-day, it's Sunday, and one of us might get lamed; so we'll wait till we get to Scarborough. By Jingo! we are in for a mist—look at that."

I looked ahead and saw advancing upon us a thick wall of dark grey impenetrable mist. Around us on either side we could still see the green bracken, yellow broom and clumps of purple heather, and the weather continued fine, but here we were confronted by an invading army of the elements.

"Put up your collar," said my companion, "we are just in for it; even if we turned back it would be too quick for us. So keep a sharp look-out for a bend in the road to the left, for when we get there, we must strike off in the opposite direction."

I moved to the left-hand side of the road, he keeping to the right, and we both walked boldly to meet the enemy. I felt elated at the prospect of adventure, but my companion grumbled incessantly.

"Just my luck," he went on, "and that beast Jones will get in before me. Now, mate, here it is, keep a sharp look-out for the bend."

The next minute the mist was upon us, gently at first, but becoming more dense every moment. I became damp, then wet, and finally saturated all over. I could not see my companion, but heard him walking and grumbling.

"Are you all right?" he shouted.

"Quite," I said. "Are you?"

"Yes, but getting beastly wet. If I had only known——"

"How long will this last?"

"Last? How do you suppose I'm to know? It may be for an hour, or a couple of days, or a week. Any sign of that bend yet?"

"The road appears quite straight to me. If there is a bend it's a very gradual one. Hadn't you better look out for your turn?"

"I can't do that, it's only a path——"

He grumbled and swore. We went on in grim silence for a considerable time, my companion getting more irritated, and I feeling more uncomfortable from the wet.

"It's raining now," I remarked.

"Stuff," he growled; "I wish it was raining. It would come and be over, and we could see where we are. Are you sure you've not passed the bend?"

"Quite, there hasn't been the slightest sign of a turn. It appears all the same to me."

"Wait a bit, I'll see if I can see the time."

He fumbled for his watch.

"Why, it's near twelve! We must have passed that bend in the road. We started at ten, and now it's twelve; that means we've done six miles, and the turn was only about five miles away. That's a nice go! Well, we'll have to do one of two things: we'll either have to go back, or cut across the moor to get on to the Malton road. Now, which shall we do?"

"Let us cross the moor, keeping well to the right."

"Come along, then, here's a bit of open."

I went across to him, and we both left the road, scrambling on to a bit of open moor, but as we could only see a few feet ahead, our progress was necessarily slow. We constantly had to avoid clumps of bracken, fierce gorse bushes, and tufted, heavy, wet heather. After an hour or two of this, my companion called a halt, and we sat down on a small boulder of grey granite.

"This is the most beastly do I have ever been in, and I'm getting hungry. I suppose you have no sandwiches on you?"

"No; I was told that we should be on the main road by one o'clock, where there are plenty of inns."

"Oh yes, that's all right, but you see we are not on the main road, and may not see it at all unless this stuff clears away, and I'm feeling a bit knocked up already."

"I think it's best to keep on walking if we possibly can. A night spent on the moors, without any cover, and nothing to eat!"

"Come along," he shouted, making off at a dash. "You're just a bit too cheerful for me."

I followed him for another hour, neither of us uttering a word, then walking up against another boulder, he sat down, I following suit. He then pulled out his pipe.

"I forgot all about my blessed pipe," he muttered, as he proceeded to fill and light it. "Don't you smoke?" he inquired.

"No."

"Nor drink?"

"No."

"Well, thou art a 'fooil.' What's your craze about that?"

"In physical training we're not allowed to smoke or drink alcohol."

He laughed sarcastically. "Well, there are some rum 'uns in the world. I just wish I had the chance, that's all."

He rose up, and we walked on, meeting with the same difficulties as before. In fact, it became a bit worse, for we came suddenly upon little pools and patches of bog mud, which we had to get round. My companion became silent and disconsolate, sitting down more frequently, and I felt it incumbent upon me to try and cheer him up.

"If we do not reach the main road soon, we are bound to reach the sea-coast very soon, for we must have done nearly twenty miles now."

"I don't care how far we've walked if we can only get on to a road and reach home."

"Of course," I said, speaking scientifically, "there is the danger of our making a curve, as our right leg makes a bigger stride than the left. In that case, we are making north instead of east——"

"Oh lor! you are a Job's comforter," he grumbled, again dashing off.

We went on walking, plodding and stumbling, until dead beat, and then we took another rest.

## CHAPTER VI

### A SEA-COAST WALK

I OFFERED to relieve my companion of the small pack he carried upon his back, but he did not answer. He was evidently in a bad way, and I felt a little anxious lest he should want to rest for too long a duration. I therefore suggested that we should start once more.

"Why," he grumbled, "what's the use? We had better sit still until this mist clears off."

"It may not clear off at all—at any rate, not for hours—and if we rest too long, we will get a chill, drenched as we are."

He rose slowly and wearily, and off we again started. It was a tiring business and continued, with two or three intervals for rest, for hours. Suddenly I stopped short, listening intently.

"I think I can hear bells," I said.

We both listened, but the welcome sound had stopped. Then as we were about to give up hope, we both heard it. It seemed to proceed from the direction in which we were going. We hurried on, and the sounds became clearer. Then they stopped altogether, but we pressed on in the same direction, and in the course of half an hour's hard tramping, we came to a ridge, with a deep valley to our left and before us. We moved along the top of this ridge until our eyes were gladdened by signs of habitation. It was a roughly constructed stone wall. At the end of this wall

we came to a gate ; it enclosed in misty shadows some outbuildings and a small farmhouse. We entered, and feeling our way, knocked at the door of the house. It was opened by a rough servant girl. I explained our position, at which she laughed immoderately.

"Well, thou'rt at Whitby now, but thee can come in an' warm theesel' at kitchen fire."

We followed her into the kitchen, a spacious apartment with oak beams and settles at each side of the fireplace. My companion sank into an armchair.

"Well, thou'rt in a mess," said the maid, looking askance at our dripping state, "and mabbe thee can do wi' summat to ate."

I decided to go on to Whitby, and inquired my way ; my companion appeared quite satisfied at his present position, so after drinking a cup of hot water, and thanking the girl, I said good-bye to my companion, and stepping out of the door, followed the direction given me. In a short time I found myself at the top of a steep hill. This I descended, having to exercise great care in doing so, as it was still very misty.

I soon reached a bridge which spanned the river. The churches were apparently emptying, as there were plenty of people about. I stumbled against a policeman and asked him where I could obtain quiet lodgings, adding, "that I had had a bad time in the mist on the moors."

He was very obliging, and offered to show me what I required. We crossed the bridge, turned to the right, then to the left, up a steep hill with several numerous turnings, then stopped at a cottage, with a miniature garden before the door. He knocked at the door, and it was opened by a thin, spare woman, to whom the officer introduced me as "a gentleman who had lost himself on the

moors, and wanted lodgings." I gave him something and thanked him for his trouble.

When I went inside the house and stood before a fire, the landlady looked dubious at my condition.

"I am afraid," said I, "that I'm in rather a damp state."

"Thee had better get off to bed, lad, atween blankets, an' laave th' clothes outside o' door, an' I'll get them dried."

I followed her up a miniature staircase into a miniature bedroom. In a very short time I had followed out her instructions. Although I was hungry, I felt very tired, and was about to compose myself for a good, welcome sleep, when the landlady reappeared, with a cup of tea and some bread and butter.

"This will do thee, until thee coomes down to supper."

I thanked her, made short work of the refreshments, and was soon asleep; not for long, however, for she again appeared with my clothes, warm and dry, and told me that supper was ready. I felt very loth to get up, but there was no help for it, so I dressed and went down. In the small kitchen there was an elderly, spare man, who proved to be the landlord, and we soon were all seated at the table, which was literally covered with everything a hungry man might desire.

The landlord was a very intelligent man; he told me of numerous instances of people having been lost on the moors, not only during the daytime, but during the night also, for, as he remarked, the mist came from the North Sea and rose very rapidly. He was a retired schoolmaster, and appeared very attached to his native town.

I soon retired to rest, and did not awaken until fairly late on the following morning. After an

excellent breakfast, and promising to be home in good time for dinner, I went on a voyage of discovery through the town. I was taken quite by surprise; the mist had disappeared, and there was a strong, warm sun which reflected on everything, making it almost too hot.

Never was I in such a curious town. The narrow river, splitting the town into halves; seawards, a couple of long quays, with a lighthouse at each end. At the inland side of the bridge, a multitude of small vessels and fishing craft were moored at each side of the quays, and farther up the river meandered away into the country. At each side of the river the town appeared to be a cluster of tiny, liliputian, red-tiled roofed dwellings. The thoroughfares were a strange medley of crooked passages and twisting alleys. Down steps and up steps; tiny shops in tiny streets; business offices in topsy turvey buildings; blind alleys and narrow courts, all thrown together like the wards of many keys, an incongruous jumble of mediæval and irregular, haphazard architecture. On the hilltop on the north side there were some modern houses. On the south side of the river, I clambered up about a couple of hundred steps to pay my respects to the old Abbey of St. Hilda, to the old ancient cross, and to the old Abbey Church. Multitudes of sea-birds were screaming, twisting, and gyrating in the air. A heavy sea dashed upon the rocks below, and westward the moors faded away in a purple haze.

I had never seen such a strange town. On my return my landlord asked me what I thought of it.

"It is strange," I answered, "a very strange place—a kind of cabinet of curios, a happy hunting-ground, I should say, for antiquarians

and historians; the river a perfect nest for smugglers and pirates, and the quaint houses, mysterious haunts for demons and pixies——"

"I am glad you like it," he returned, smiling, "for, indeed, it is all that you say, and that not very long ago. To-day we have a fluctuating 'jet trade;' at that shipbuilding yard, where you now hear the noise of many hammers, Captain Cook, the famous navigator, was once an apprentice. Early this century, smuggling was carried on to excess, and before that, piracy flourished. Robin Hood was a frequent visitor here, and to the old abbey on the moor beyond. Before that it was the home of Vikings and sea-rovers, its origin, indeed, melts away into the dark ages."

After a very pleasant day at Whitby, I rose up early on the following morning to continue my journey to Scarborough, about twenty-one miles away along the coast road to the south, which my landlord had informed me, was a very wild and picturesque road.

I crossed over the river bridge, and as I did so I felt a little disappointed at not seeing daring smugglers or black-bearded pirates with a brace of pistols in their belts, marching along the quay, and as I ascended the hill on the opposite side, disappointed at not seeing Robin Hood and his merry men coming down into the town to exact toll for their requirements. Truly no town in the kingdom lends itself so much to the spirit of romance as this coast town of Whitby.

I plodded up the hill thinking it would never come to an end, and making my thoughts revert from the "Pilgrim's Progress" to the youth in "Excelsior." I had passed and left the old abbey on my left, and still the cry was onward and upward. When at last I fancied I had reached

the top, I found a switchback descent, and another rise on the opposite side. This continued for some time, then, weary of the road, I turned eastward, and walked across the moor to the sea. Here I rested on a couch of heather, my feet dangling over a cliff, watching the strong waves break upon the ledges of rock below, myriads of sea-birds screaming and flying above. I felt tempted to have a bathe, but when I endeavoured to find my way to the rocks beneath, found it too hazardous even for a goat to attempt, so lingered on, having my sea-bath in fancy.

After resting, and I am afraid dreaming, I again made my way on to the road, only to find that I had another stiff hill to climb. When I reached the summit, there was a most beautiful view. To the east the moor shelved down to the edge of the cliffs. Every now and then pinnacles of spray from the storm-tossed waves beneath appeared above the surface. To the north there was the tiny Robin Hood's Bay, with its pair of high peaks at each extremity. To the south there appeared stretches of moor, with stupendous, steep, irregular cliffs at its edge, and as far as the eye could reach, spray from the dashing waters below. Seaward, fishing craft, with occasional trading vessels and distant smoke from steamers, completed the picture. Behind me to the westward there were endless plains of gorse and heather, and beyond, distant hills rising one upon the other until they melted on the sky-line.

As it was now noon I took out my modest sandwiches and had my dinner, for my experiences on the Pickering Moors had taught me that readiness in all things is a desirable virtue. I looked about for a spring to quench my thirst, but I could not see one. I, however, had not

long to wait, for at the bottom of the next descent I found a running brook with plenty of fresh, drinkable water in it.

From this, onward, my walk was a panorama of Nature's beauties: gorse and bracken, purple heather, ferny dells, running streams, miniature bridges, cascades of water, with every now and then, through a vista of colour, tiny peeps of the sea.

To my relief, also, I found the road more undulating, with a tendency to fall. This continued through gulleys of lichen-covered cliffs and groves of dark firs for some miles. I passed through the quaint village of Burniston without stopping, and shortly afterwards obtained a distant view of Scarborough. The old castle on the north cliff was a commanding object, and after passing over some easy-going road, I made my last ascent up a gradual, rising hill, until I reached a terrace of houses, close to the castle and facing the sea.

I was fortunate enough to obtain lodgings in one of these houses, and, after an excellent tea, proceeded to the castle, first stopping at the old church of St. Mary's, where one of the Brontes is buried.

Few castles have had so many hard knocks as Scarborough Castle. During the past centuries it has been taken and retaken, and repelled more attacks than probably any other castle in the country, and now it stands, like an ancient warrior, frowning on the edge of a steep cliff, which in itself seems scarcely strong enough to sustain it. I passed through the castle, and down endless steps for at least a couple of hundred feet, until I reached the quay-side below. The town to me appeared like a beautiful amphitheatre, with lofty peaks in the background,

with deep chasms bridged over, and verdure everywhere. The spacious seafront was reached by zig-zag paths, and to me it certainly appeared entitled to its claim of "Queen of Watering Places."

Passing into the denser part of the town I came upon a waste piece of ground, on which stood a circus with a platform at the front, and on which, from time to time, came various members of the company, who indulged in some acrobatic posing, to the accompaniment of some braying brass instruments. High in the background, on a framework, there was an enormous oil painting; it represented a locomotive on a railway line. It was in a glow of red light, overplus steam issued from all parts of it, the engine-driver, hair on end, was in a state of great excitement, and drops of perspiration were plainly visible upon the forehead of the stoker, as he threw the coals into the gaping, fiery furnace. It would have reached a record speed, but there was one obstacle—this was the figure of a strong man, "Sullivanski," the Russian Hercules, who had seized the coupling between his teeth. He was in a gladiatorial attitude, and, apparently, as shown by the sparks and the skidding wheels, defied the efforts of the engine to budge an inch.

Making up my mind to see this marvel, I proceeded up the narrow gangway and across the platform, paid twopence admission, and entered the booth. I was just in time. Sullivanski, in an unmistakable Hibernian brogue, was engaged in delivering his soul of matters appertaining to strength and strong men.

"Samson carried away the gates o' Gaza, but I've carried away the gates o' Paykin. Vulcan forged iron chains with a hammer, I will

break them chains on my muscles. Cyclops lifted a water-barrel with his hands, but I will do it with my taath. Hercules lifted an elephant in his arms, but I will lift that also with my taath. Ajax defied the lightning, but, begorra! I'll defy anybody or anything."

"Wot about stame engine?" asked a voice from the audience; "thou canna doa that."

"Bring in the engine here, and I'll show ye what I can do."

"Thou'rt a sham," repeated the interrupter, a big, brawny man.

"Am I?" replied Sullivanski, furiously. "Come here, and I'll show ye whether I'm a sham or not."

There was a whispered colloquy where the interruption took place, then, amidst great excitement, the big countryman stepped into the arena.

"Aw don't mind if I 'ave a tussle with 'e," he said, throwing down his cap.

Sullivanski rubbed his chin. "Are ye a married man?" he queried.

"Maybe I am," was the cautious rejoinder.

"Well, go home to your wife and children, I don't want to make a corpse of ye."

But the audience cheered, and incited their champion to stand his ground.

"His blood be on your heads," replied Sullivanski, solemnly. "Come on, hippopotamus."

The big Yorkshireman advanced, and they closed in a deadly grip. They writhed and twisted from side so side, first one and then the other appearing to gain a slight advantage. The excitement became intense, especially when at one time the countryman appeared to have the best of it. But the "Strong Man," though of slight build, with a lightning movement,

eluded the attempt, and then, with a supreme effort, lifted his man up, and brought him down, with a heavy thud, to the earth. The audience, although manifestly disappointed, were generous in their applause to the victor. Sullivanski raised his late opponent, asked tenderly if he were hurt; and on receiving a negative reply, suggested another trial of strength. He would, he said, pull him all over the arena by the strength of his teeth alone.

He therefore placed between his teeth a leather thong, to which was attached a rope. The Yorkshireman took hold of the end of it, and a tug-of-war ensued. It looked odds against the strong man, for his opponent was quite four stones heavier, and as he was gradually pulled towards the winning line, the people stood up in their excitement. Then an extraordinary sight happened. Just as he was about to be pulled over the line, Sullivanski made a determined effort, twisting and tossing his head in all directions to get his opponent off his balance. This at last he succeeded in doing, and, to every one's astonishment, slowly, but surely, pulled his opponent over.

This occasioned much applause, and a short speech from the victor. It was hard work, he admitted, his antagonist had wrestled well, and pulled well, but although he had lost both, he deserved well of his "counthry," etc., etc. He would, therefore, before going on with the remainder of his performance, make a collection for him, to which he himself, although a poor man, would contribute half a crown.

This proposal, and the generosity of the "Strong Man," occasioned general approval. Sullivanski at once took up the collection, the countryman, meanwhile, looking sheepishly on.

After the money had been presented, Sullivanski, amidst much applause, went on with the remainder of his feats. These were certainly of a remarkable character. He bound a chain around his upper arm, and then, by a contraction of the biceps muscles, broke the chain in two. After this a couple of men rolled a barrel of water into the arena, which, after much exertion, he lifted with his teeth. His feats were concluded by the appearance of a small elephant, the latter being made of rubber and blown up to an abnormal size; this he balanced upon his nose, and many other absurd feats, which finished a very successful performance, Sullivanski having to return to bow his acknowledgements, which he did with the air of a Russian prince.

I contrived to send a message to him by the programme-boy, and met him outside. I introduced myself to him, and asked him if he would join me at supper. He agreed, and we adjourned to a restaurant close by. I told him what my profession was, and that I had a thirst after knowledge.

"I am afraid," I observed, "that the big countryman did not utilise his weight correctly, or——"

"Shure, an' he does it well enough, an' I pay him well enough for the job, for he shares the collection with me. Good money for five minutes' work."

He told me the secret of his other feats also, only stipulating that I must treat it as confidential, which I felt bound to do, but which were of the same nature as his victory over the countryman.

"Your stringth an' business are hard work," he observed, "but mine is brain work. It's a

mimber of Parliament I was intended for. Ye see, mimbers of Parliament in ould Oireland are different to mimbers in this counthry. All ye have to do is to stand at a sthreet corner an' blackguard the Government. Maybe breaking a magistrate's windows, or killing a policeman. Well, I could have done all these things, but there was too much jealousy, an' Pat Dempsey got the job instead, so I'm doing this for the present, but I'll be in Parliament yet."

I sympathised with him, and we spent a very pleasant evening, for I found him a man of much information, and most diverting in his manner.

## CHAPTER VII

### A ROAD PHILOSOPHER

WHILE at Scarborough I walked to Filey and Bridlington, a couple of attractive sea-coast villages to the south, but I did not find the road so attractive or picturesque as that between Whitby and Scarborough. The country was more of an undulating character, and the roads were much easier going. Filey, however, seemed a very healthy spot for those requiring quiet and rest, while Bridlington appealed more to pleasure seekers. I returned by train to Scarborough, and could not help comparing it favourably with the places I had visited.

After finishing my work, I determined to go to York, and heard, quite by accident, that a coach was leaving the town that evening for New Malton, some twenty-three miles away, and about halfway to York. The coach was due to leave at 11.30 p.m., and as a midnight ride appealed to me, I secured a box seat, sending on my luggage by rail. I turned up at the time appointed to start, but it was twelve o'clock before we left beautiful Scarborough, now almost in a state of darkness.

It was a cold night, which increased in bitterness as we left the town, and some of the passengers retreated indoors for shelter from the wind. The driver was a gruff man, who told me that his passengers were principally farmers

and commercials, who wished to catch the railway connection at Malton.

"Scarborough," he said, "had a good service of trains going there, but very bad getting away; once they got folks there they didn't like them to leave, hence the bad service leaving the town."

The road had now become very dark, the lamps of the coach showed a fitful light in advance, and the trees, like gaunt spectral shadows, defining the course of the road at either side. The night continued cold, and as I was not very heavily clothed, I took advantage of a rise in the ground, and expressed a wish to the driver to get down, so that I might run a little to keep up the circulation. He flicked his uniform team, and replied brusquely that he could not keep his horses waiting for any one; I, however, jumped down, and as the horses were going at a slow pace, walked alongside the coach. At the top of the rise, I felt warmer and more comfortable than I had done on the box-seat, so I told the driver that I would run a little. He instantly whipped up the horses, and for a short time I looked like being left behind on the dark roadway, but keeping its rear lamp in view, I settled down to my "harrier's pace," and by the time the coach had reached the next rise I had come up alongside it.

The driver inquired gruffly if I was coming up, but I told him that I felt more comfortable running, at which he said he would not wait for me any longer, and again whipped up his horses; but I felt in good form, and confident that the coach could not leave me far behind, so I jogged on after it, sometimes reaching it, and occasionally passing it, as it laboured up a hill.

It now appeared from the excited talk of the passengers that they were betting on my being able to reach Malton in their company, and I was

abjured by some of them "to keep it up, and not be beaten," while others incited the coachman "to put on speed, and leave me behind." I took no notice of their remarks, but continued to plod on at an easy pace. I could tell from the blowing of the horses and the steam which rose from their flanks that they were already feeling the effects of the prolonged rise from Scarborough, and felt confident that I could get to the end of the journey in their company.

After we had proceeded about eleven miles, we stopped at the little village of Sherburn, which looked very ghostly in the darkness, for a few minutes, to water the horses, and to refresh some of the passengers also. Some of the latter tried to persuade me to mount my seat, or I would get left behind, as the road became easier a little further on; but I told them that I felt quite comfortable, and much better than sitting on the cold roof above.

In a couple of minutes the coach was off again, I following at its rear; the water had evidently given the horses a fillip, for they appeared to run better, and for a little time I was left behind. I, however, kept the light of the coach steadily in view, and going at a comfortable stride, picked it up at the next rise. The passengers now appeared to be getting more excited, one section inviting me "to coome up, and gi' o'er tom-fool's game," while others charged the driver to hurry on, or he and his horses would be disgraced.

I now commenced to take some interest in the game myself. I had intended to mount after I had gone a dozen miles or so, but as I did not feel tired, and felt that I might get a chill if I mounted my seat again after getting so warm, I decided to continue running, feeling pretty confident that I would not be very far behind the

coach and its tired steeds when it reached Malton.

Daybreak was now commencing to make its appearance, and for a moment I turned and stood still to admire the beautiful phenomena of Nature, as the great globular lamp in the east threw its many shafts of light into the cimmerian darkness of the west, gilding and creating thousands of dazzling gems with the fiery flashes of its power.

We were now approaching Rillington, about eighteen miles from Scarborough. We passed through the village in the early morning, the horses appearing a little jaded from their exertions. Again the passengers tried to persuade me to mount, while others made a last appeal to coachy to hurry up; but I would not be persuaded, and the horses did not appear to be equal to any fresh effort. The road, however, was now fairly level, and rather in favour of the team. But they appeared to be quite unable to increase their speed, so I hung on doggedly to the rear of the coach until I saw the town about a mile away, when I went to the front, and amidst much excitement from the passengers, and cracking of the driver's whip, maintained my lead, reaching Malton a little in advance of my four-wheeled rival, and feeling no worse for my exertions.

The passengers—that is, those who laid wagers upon me—were loud in their praise, and I had many invitations to "coome an' sup." I, however, retired to rest, and when I awoke at breakfast time, saw very few of my late companions. The driver, however, grudgingly admitted that his team had been fairly beaten. As for myself, I had often done the same distance before on different "harriers' runs," and quite enjoyed the experience.

After making inquiries about the road to

York, which I was told was a "fairish" one, and about eighteen miles away, I started for that ancient city. The first part of the way was pretty level, the fields at either side being under cultivation, but after a little distance it commenced to dip up and down, some of the hills being rather steep. At the foot of one of these I met a man with a donkey-cart, who appeared to be in difficulties. The cart was a flat arrangement, and underneath there seemed to be a second edition of this, making a kind of cupboard. The man, who was of middle age, slightly built, with a peculiar expression upon his face, was assisting his beast, apparently without success, to mount the hill. I volunteered my services, and the extra weight got the contrivance up to the top.

"Much obliged, mister," he said, addressing me; "it was just the last ounce o' weight you put in that brought us up. Now, Josephine," said he, addressing the donkey, "we'll take a rest, and you can take some of that nice grass, if you've a mind to."

The animal complied, eating the pasture from the wide margin on the roadside.

"A nice donkey," I suggested, nodding to Josephine.

"A beauty; you only want to understand 'em, and they'll do anything for you. Now, Josephine and me have been on the roads for years together, an' we're the best o' pals, an' I'd sooner talk to Josephine than I would to the folks I generally meet on the road. Of course, there are exceptions," he said, eying me keenly; "but as a rule, folks in this world are either knaves or fools, or prigs or snobs."

"You must have had a bad experience, to be so sweeping in your judgment."

"I've had a long experience, been on the road

for a quarter of a century ; used to live in towns before then, but I couldn't abide the smoke an' dirt, an' bad air, so I took to the road. I used to 'foot it' at first, but now I've got Josephine, an' we're quite happy. Come along, old girl."

Then they proceeded on their journey ; I walked alongside them, glad of the companionship.

"What business do you follow ?" I asked.

He looked at me with a twinkle in his eye.

"Trader and philanthropist," he replied.

"Trader, I can understand, but why a philanthropist ?"

"It's right. I buy all sorts of things from the country folk, and give them money back. Money for old things, money for furniture, money for grandfather's clocks, money for old books, money for antiques, money for old bottles, money for nowt. And," he added, impressively, "I give new books for old 'uns."

"A very varied and interesting profession, but I don't see where your philanthropy comes in."

"Nay, no one can, but it's there all the same. These big nobs in London as gives plenty o' money away, their name appears in the papers—mine don't. They gets a knighthood—I don't ; they'll get buried in Westminster Abbey—I won't. Yet I give money away every day, money for rubbish, an' folks are glad to see me."

"Does it pay you, or is it all philanthropy ?"

"Oh, it pays right enough ; sometimes I drop on a good thing, and make summat decent."

We had gone down a gentle slope at the foot of which there were several cottages. The man took out a large shell from the rear of his cart, and tootled a call upon it. The doors of the cottages were immediately alive with people, and some brisk bargaining went on. Old books were exchanged for new ones, money was given for old

bottles, one or two pieces of old brass ornaments exchanged hands, and the "deal" appeared to give satisfaction to both sides.

I helped Josephine and her master up the opposite hill, and for some time afterwards the road was undulating, with rich meadows at either side. We at length came to a steep dip in the road, which led to a pretty village on the banks of a rocky, turbulent river. Here the three of us had luncheon, Josephine having more grass, while the trader brought out a small spirit-lamp. Filling a tiny tin kettle with water from the neighbouring stream, he boiled it, and made some tea; I took out my sandwiches, and we had a pleasant meal together. The trader told me that he intended to stay in the village for some time, as it was one of his hunting-grounds. I bade him and Josephine good-bye, and proceeded on my journey.

There was quite a steep hill to get out of the village, after which the road was a gradual descent amidst rich country to York.

I stayed here some time, meeting with some success, as I invariably did at military towns. The old, historic buildings in the town were a great attraction to me, and I was never tired of visiting the minster, the old abbey church, and the walls, as well as the river.

After finishing at York, I went on to Leeds, which to me seemed a murky, smoky town after York, but like many of our smoky towns, it had beautiful surroundings.

My last town to visit in Yorkshire was Ilkley, and as I was told it was a very interesting road I decided to walk there. But I was not to get out of Yorkshire without another taste of its spiteful weather. The season was now getting advanced. I had during the evening walked out

to Horsforth, a village about four miles from Leeds. Here I procured lodgings at a cottage on the roadside.

After asking the landlord to call me at five in the morning, I was proceeding to retire to rest, when quite a number of young Irishmen entered the cottage, and after imbibing much whisky and very little water, proceeded to hold a Fenian branch meeting of the parent organisation. Between their drinks they went over the wrongs of Ireland, and cursed their Saxon oppressors, insisting very loudly that I should join them. I, however, retired to rest, or rather to my room, for they continued their revilings until long past midnight.

The landlord woke me at five, and after dressing, I started on my journey. On opening the door I was somewhat taken aback by the appearance of the weather. It was rather dark, and the land was covered with a deep snowfall, it being at least a couple of feet deep outside the door.

As it was important I should be at Ilkley in good time, I determined to go on with my walk, and tramped up the north road with some difficulty. This increased as I proceeded, and after a couple of miles, during which time the snow continued to fall heavily, I came upon a ghostly mass in the middle of the road. It proved to be a miller's dray with a team of four horses, who stood like spectral statues, immovable, with the exception of their heads, which were busy in their separate nosebags. The driver was on the box, completely covered with tarpaulin. I shouted to him. The tarpaulin opened, and a ruddy face appeared. I inquired the way to Ilkley. He inquired "if I were a 'fooil'?" I retaliated by inquiring if he were one?

"Yes," he admitted, "and a big 'un too. I'm bound for Leeds, but I doubt if I can get there, but I am waiting for leet to coome. Doant thee try to get to Ilkley along this road, it's more than thee can do."

I told him I was obliged to go. Whereupon he added, "Well, if thou'rt bound to go, keep thee to high land on top o' moors, straight ower there," and he pointed in a north-westerly direction.

I thanked him, then climbed over a gate, and made across the snowy fields in a bee line for my destination. After battling with the snow for a considerable distance, I was stopped by a stone wall, heavily covered with snow, which I got over, then upward, over more snow, to another wall, which I also got over. This continued so frequently that I thought I must ultimately make acquaintance with the clouds. The light, however, was commencing to appear, and after much hard fighting I found myself on the summit of a moor. From here the view was most desolate. There was no sign of any human habitation, no landmarks, nothing but snow. As far as the eye could reach it was a series of valleys and hills, with snow everywhere, and still coming down.

I scrambled on; it was not walking, for I had as much climbing to do as anything else; but I went on and on, proceeding as far as I was able to guess, in the direction given me. At length, after having had some hours at this kind of work, I sat down in the snow, and commenced to eat my sandwiches. Even in that short interval of rest I was becoming covered with the ever-falling snow.

I therefore rose up, shook myself, and proceeded on my way. I went down hillsides, across valleys, climbed hills on the opposite slopes, crossed high levels, stumbled into ruts, collided

against boulders, scratching my hands and bruising my shins, until I thought I had had quite enough of it. Still it went on, more struggles and more snow, until about noon I found myself on the edge of a steep declivity, where, deep down in the bottom of a basin, it seemed to me, there nestled a little town, the ascending smoke from its chimneys mingling in a confused battle with the falling snowflakes. It was so steep where I stood that I had to climb down, and ultimately reached a house, where I inquired the name of the town. It proved to be Ilkley.

When I reached the town, which was more like a Swiss than an English town, I obtained lodgings at the old Crescent Inn, where I was soon made comfortable. There was little to see in Ilkley, except snow. After finishing my work, therefore, I returned to Lancashire, where there had been very little snow, and at Liverpool none at all.

As I walked through the town on the following morning, I noticed from time to time that many people were looking at me keenly. I felt a little uncomfortable, thinking that I had forgotten to put on my collar, or that my nose was smudged. When I reached Castle Street, I saw an old friend coming along. As he caught sight of me, he changed colour, and seemed anxious to avoid me. I stopped, and coming up hastily, he said, with a gasp—

"I say, you're Alexander, aren't you?"

"I think so," I returned.

"Well, I'm very glad; how are you? Shake hands, old fellow. You see, your death appeared in the papers last week—very sad account. We were all sorry, and——"

"What paper?" I asked.

"Well, I saw it in the *Daily Post*."

"I'll call on that paper. Good-bye."

We parted, he still looking a little confused. I went to the *Daily Post* office, then in Lord Street, and asked to see the editor. The important and supercilious office boy asked if I had an appointment.

"No," said I.

"Then you can't see him," he said, decisively. "No interviews without appointments."

I hypnotised him with a glance. "You insignificant, unprepossessing, inarticulate, sniff of humanity, take up my name at once," and I looked darkly at him.

"What name, sir?" he asked meekly.

"The late Mr. Alexander," I replied.

He vanished, and in a few minutes returned with an invitation for me to follow him. I went upstairs after him, and he knocked at a door. There was a gruff "Come in," and I followed my young friend into the editor's sanctum. He sat in an armchair at a table, a man a little over middle age, with the usual worried look of editors apparently weighing heavily upon him.

"I did not quite understand your message, sir; the boy said the late Mr. Alexander?"

"That is so. According to your paper, I was killed last week, and some of my acquaintances, whom I met this morning, appear hurt that it is not so."

"Let me see," he said, in a bewildered tone. "What day was it? You are the Gymnasium Mr. Alexander, aren't you?"

He rose up and consulted a file. "Ah, here it is," and he read the short obituary. "Well, I'll put it right in to-morrow's paper. I am very glad it is not correct. Perhaps you would like to amplify the correction, or say something about your career?"

"No thanks; just mention that I am not dead. Good morning."

We shook hands, and the next issue of the *Daily Post* contained the correction.

I am afraid that my somewhat risky profession, which lent itself to frequent accidents, occasionally exaggerated these mishaps into obituaries.

## CHAPTER VIII

### ON THE MOURNE MOUNTAINS

In the early seventies I determined to visit Scotland, and wishing to reach Glasgow, I hesitated whether to walk, train, or go by boat. I would have preferred a tramp, but decided that it would take up too much time. The slow trains of that period were very trying; as for the third, I reflected that if I could not obtain championship honours in aught else, I would at least occupy that position as subject to *mal de mer* person. Thinking, however, that this squeamishness might be overcome, I sought expert opinion, and the "old salt" that I consulted told me with many waves of his discoloured pipe, that to take a Glasgow boat on a dirty night, "A real nor-wester, mate, or a fog with a ground swell, or a dead west on to the port side, that, and a good square meal, and you'll be as right as a top, an' cured o' that 'ere malady they calls 'mally-de-marc.'"

I followed his advice, and long before we encountered the storm that blew from everywhere, I was in the throes of "mally-de-marc." When it grew worse, if that were possible, we were ordered down below. How I got there, I can't remember, but later on there was a violent concussion, and everybody hurried on deck as best they could. I remained below.

Then an intolerable silence followed, and it seemed as if I were the sole occupant of the ship.

I fell asleep. A couple of hours later I heard tramping of feet overhead, and two or three seamen came down below. They told me there had been a collision, and our boat was being towed to Glasgow.

When we arrived at Glasgow, I was carried, with my luggage, on to the quay. A cabman shortly afterwards came up, and I gave him the address of lodgings which I had provided myself with. These were in a "close" at the top of Buchanan Street. Fortunately the rooms were only three storeys up.

The landlady, who smelled strongly of whisky which she informed me she took for toothache, gave me some supper, and soon afterwards I was in my cupboard bed. I was just about to settle down to a comfortable slumber, when there was a loud rapping at my door, and the voice of the landlady called out in loud tones—

"D'ye nae ken it's th' Sabboth, an' th' kirk commences at nine o' th' morning."

I rose up, washed, partook of my "cold" breakfast—the landlady informed me that she never cooked on the Sabbath—and meekly went to kirk.

I went to the Glasgow Cathedral, and although the three hours' service was rather trying, I enjoyed the novelty of it all very much. The beautiful stained windows, provided by the noble Houses of Scotland, the historic crypt, where Cromwell had housed his troopers, the interesting monuments, the quaint pulpit with the choir around its base, the harmonious rendering, without any instrumental accompaniment, of the Psalms by the singers, and the strange sermon by the very serious minister, all made a strong impression upon me.

I returned home to my "cold" dinner, where

the landlady, who still had the toothache, catechised me as to the sermon. In the evening, after being enjoined by the suffering landlady "not to be aboot i' th' streets later than nine o' th' clock," I walked towards the University.

As I approached the park I whistled, this being the only instrument where I show any proficiency, softly to myself, when a tall, dark policeman came out from a dark corner, and placing his hand roughly on my shoulder, said—

"Stop your whistling, d'ye nae ken it's the Sabbath?"

I expressed my regret, and he let me go. After admiring the beautiful park with its noble pile of university buildings, I returned to my lodgings. The door was opened by the landlady, who, alas! was still suffering, and who informed me in a stage whisper, that she had another young gentleman lodger just arrived, and would I have any objection to his having his meals with me, as mine was the larger room. Of course I expressed my willingness, and shortly afterwards cold supper was laid for two.

I found my fellow-lodger a very pleasant companion; he was a tall young Irishman, a divinity student of Trinity College, Dublin. He told me that he had had a very bad passage, and that he was so ill he was scarcely able to stand on his legs.

"I told the cabman to take me to the George Hotel," said he. "I gave him a couple of shillings for his fare, which he looked at askance, after the manner of the Dublin jarveys. I asked him if that was not sufficient; he said it was, raised his hat, and went off. Later on, when I got in the hotel, I discovered that I had given him a couple of sovereigns; but that was not all my misfortune, for after dinner I went to the drawing-room, and opening the piano, commenced to

play. The manager instantly appeared, and informed me that I must not play music on the Sabbath, so I left the hotel and came on here."

I told him my experiences, and we compared notes over many things. When the landlady came to remove the supper things, she and her Irish lodger had a discussion on present and past divines. When she left, he remarked that there was a peculiar odour about. I explained that Mistress Meikle suffered from toothache; on which he gave me a disquisition upon the relative merits of Irish and Scotch whisky, a subject on which he appeared to me to be a great authority.

We passed a very pleasant week together, visiting all the historical nooks, especially in relation to Rob Roy, of the neighbourhood. He then went north, and I to Belfast. I travelled by the short sea passage route between Stranraer and Larne. When we arrived at Stranraer there was a very boisterous sea on, and short as the passage was, the captain hesitated to start; but urged by some Irish drovers, he at length consented to do so. I had my luggage carried on board, but for safety's sake I carried a blue bandbox containing a new tall hat which I had purchased at Glasgow, and in which Mistress Meikle had thoughtfully stowed away some sandwiches.

Directly we got out of the loch we ran into a terrible sea. All the passengers were ordered down below, and in a short time every one appeared to be very ill, a performance in which I, as usual, distinguished myself. To add to our discomfort, the waves came pouring down the companion way, and in a few minutes reached a depth of a couple of feet. Various articles, including my bandbox, commenced to sail over this inland sea; and many tried to go up on deck. One lady of

brobdingnagian proportions essayed the task, but before she could reach the companion way, the boat gave a lurch, she slipped, and fell on my bandbox, my new tall hat being reduced to the same level as the sandwiches which it contained.

When we reached Larne, two hours late, one of the crew brought my luggage, including the flattened bandbox, to the train. There was not sufficient accommodation at the Larne hotel, and I was obliged, therefore, to go on to Belfast. I arrived there a little after midnight. There were no side cars to be had, and everything looked desolate and dreary. Leaving my luggage at the station, and feeling very ill, I staggered through the streets to look for an hotel. Seeing a policeman in the distance, I struggled up towards him, and asked him if he could direct me to an hotel. The tall minion of the law looked at my swaying figure, then said sternly—

"Get off, ye drunken blaguard, or it's locking ye up I'll be."

Now as I was a lifelong abstainer, I felt this to be a reflection on my principles, and told him so. In truth, his breath reminded me of Mistress Meikle's toothache.

"Is it back answers you're givin' me? Come here, ye blaguard," and he made a grab at me.

In that instant my impulse was to attempt a "knock out;" but I reflected I might have to spend a little time in durance vile, with perhaps an apology after a few hours' detention, so I merely, after the manner of "half-backs," stepped on one side, and he went on a pace or two.

This seemed to infuriate him, for he turned round and reviled me, told me that he "knew" me, that he had been on the look-out for me, and would have me. Then he made another violent rush upon me, but the "half-back"

tactics again succeeded. This time he went down on his face, then rolling on to his back he blew his whistle furiously. I now thought it time to disappear, which I did, into the first hotel I came to.

I demonstrated with some success at Belfast, made some friends amongst the warm-hearted Belfast people, and then went on by train to Dungannon. I stayed at the "tuck shop" of the school, where they often put up visitors, and I found it very comfortable. The landlord proved to be an ardent Orangeman. He was a tall, gaunt man, with dark, burning eyes, which seemed to say that their owner had a mission in life to perform. He was like many others that I met, an enthusiastic devotee to the national beverage, which explained many of his actions. Nevertheless, I was surprised when I was aroused from sleep that night by a huge shillalah being placed upon my face, and a hoarse voice whispering in my ear—

"Come out, an' help me to kill a Papist!"

His wife and family also appeared at my bedroom door, and after some difficulty, and a promise on my part to kill a thousand in the morning, induced him to retire to rest. When I mentioned this incident to one of the masters of Dungannon school, he replied—

"Well, the other side are quite as bad. When the priest here thinks there is going to be a row, he hands out sticks to his flock with the instructions, 'If ye see a head, shtrike, and if it's a Protestant head, shtrike hard.'"

During the time I had been in Belfast, I noticed large placards announcing that Captain Adams, the aeronaut, of Crystal Palace fame, would shortly make an ascent at Ormeau Park in that town, and I wrote to him, offering to perform

some gymnastic feats on a small trapeze suspended from his car. I now received a letter from him expressing his willingness, on the understanding that it would entail no expense or liability on his part. As my object, however, was merely a bit of adventure, and to gain some notoriety, I returned to Belfast to undertake my new task.

When I reached the park there was a stiff wind blowing, and the huge balloon, which was being filled by gas from a main, was swaying uneasily from side to side. I fastened my gear to the basket, and having dressed in a small tent in gymnastic costume, placed my ordinary street attire in a bundle in the car, intending to dress as soon as we had ascended out of view. The balloon was almost full when Captain Adams came to me and whispered uneasily—

"There's a strong west wind on; I am afraid we shall be driven out to sea."

I did not answer, but I must own that I felt distinctly uncomfortable at this prospect. I, however, waited patiently for my orders, when suddenly there was a terrible smell of gas, and Captain Adams rushed about, shouting—

"Run—explosion!"

The huge crowd melted as if by magic. There was no explosion, however, the wind had merely increased in violence, and driven the balloon on to a neighbouring tree, the branches of which pierced the silk covering. As soon as the crowd realised that there was not going to be even an explosion, they became cross, and rushing upon the wounded balloon, tore it to pieces, I regaining my clothes and tackle with some difficulty.

At Belfast I made the acquaintance of a man named Philips, who was on his way to Dundalk. He was about thirty years of age, good looking,

had travelled far, could speak French fluently, and was an accomplished musician. As I intended to visit Dublin next, I suggested that we should walk the distance as far as Dundalk; but he replied that he had arranged to meet some friends, as the train passed through a wayside station *en route*, but suggested that we should go on to Newcastle, and walk along the ridge of the Mourne Mountains to their southern extremity at Rosstrevor, and finish the remainder of our journey by train.

"In this way," he said, "you will get a beautiful walk, with magnificent scenery all around you."

We accordingly started for Newcastle. There was a bevy of young ladies assembled on the platform to meet my companion during our stay of a few minutes at a small station, and as the train left, he persisted in thrusting his head through the open window to wave his farewells. Now, as the strong wind was still with us, I cautioned him to be careful of his hat; the caution, however, was given too late, for the hat flew off in the direction of his fair companions. I put my head out of the window to see what course the hat had taken, when mine also flew off, and shared the fate of my companion's.

Feeling annoyed, and very foolish, we withdrew our heads, and sat gloomily in our respective corners. The remaining occupants of the carriage, who were mainly of the agricultural class, were not slow to take advantage of our misfortune, for they not only laughed with great vigour, but dropped remarks, such as, "Maybe they were throwing their hats at their young ladies as a kapesake," or "They'll make good 'bowlers' for their cricket club, anyway," or "Shure, an' it will make more room for the brains to grow"—

each sally being greeted with much laughter. It was impossible to remain dignified under these conditions, so we wisely joined in the fun.

When we arrived at Newcastle, we walked—a source of suspicion to the sergeant of constabulary, who kept his eye upon us—to the general store, and bought a couple of hats. We had some difficulty in getting a fit. The man who waited upon us said our heads were not the right shape; as for the style, they were of the early Victorian.

We then commenced our walk towards the Mourne Mountains. It was through a well-cultivated country, wheat, oats, barley, potatoes, and flax being grown everywhere.

It was a considerable time, and involved much steady climbing, before we reached the summit of the hills, but the prospect was very delightful—woods, and sea to the east, and bogland and moors to the west predominating. We walked along at a good pace, stopping every now and then to admire the scenery, and meeting with very few people. When we came to a cross-roads, my companion stated that there was a lake to the westward, and we agreed to digress from our course to take a look at it; but after walking a mile or two, and seeing nothing but water-logged bog-fields, we decided to cut across country in a south-easterly direction, in order to regain the main road. That decision was our undoing, for after tramping for miles without meeting any one, with bog and moor all around us, we arrived at the conclusion that we had lost our way.

Trudging on a little longer, we saw what appeared to be a farmhouse in the distance; but when we arrived nearer, it turned out to be a large stack of turf bricks. We climbed to the top of this elevation to have a look round, and saw a thin column of smoke not very far away.

We made for it, and discovered it to be a cabin, and luckily for us, not very far from the main road.

We knocked at the door, and asked if we could have any refreshment, as we had lost our way, and were exceedingly hungry. The woman invited us to come in and sit down by the peat fire, which we were glad to do while she got our meal ready. Fowls were constantly coming in, some were roosting upon the rafters above our heads, and a great pig with a loud grunt, also came in to make our acquaintance. In a short time the woman, telling us our "tay" was ready, showed us to the remaining room in the cabin. This proved to be a bedroom, and here we found, spread out on a table before a tiny altar, a simple but welcome repast. This consisted of a couple of large goose eggs, the first I had ever seen, a large plate of thick bread and butter, and some very black tea; but hunger makes a good sauce, and we ate very heartily.

Then my companion caught sight of a fiddle hanging up on the wall. He took it down and tried it, playing one of Moore's melodies with much taste. The woman peeped in, and Philips stopped, but she asked him to go on. The fiddle belonged to an absent son, who was now in America. Philips went on playing, and we saw the woman go out and mount on to the turf stack; here she placed her hands to her mouth and gave a weird cry. In a few minutes the road at the front of the cabin was partially filled with quite a number of men, women, and boys and girls, who formed quite an appreciative audience, and Philips played all the Irish airs he could think of.

Then the woman came and said the girls wanted a dance, so we went out and sat on a turf

wall, while the dancing went on with great spirit on the main road. Reels and dances of every description were indulged in; finally, the door of the cabin was lifted off its hinges and placed on the main road. Here on this small platform, men and women, boys and girls, faced each other alternately in a competitive Irish jig, the males always giving way to the ladies in the trial of endurance.

Some girls now approached us and asked us if we would dance a jig with them; Philips said he could not play and dance at the same time, and I declared my ignorance; but they would take no refusal, and half-dragged and half-carried me on to the mimic platform. I was faced by a merry, black-haired, black-eyed colleen, who took hold of me and put me through my facings, turning and twisting me at critical and unexpected moments, to the incessant and infectious music of Philips' fiddle. Needless to say, my effort caused much good-humoured laughter, and I am fain to admit that out of the many extravagant contortions which my body has gone through in many years, that Irish jig was one of the most bewildering to me.

We left our Irish friends with regret, receiving a wild whoop on our departure, and marvelling how they could show such a superabundance of animal spirits in such desolate surroundings. A few miles more brought us near to the end of our walk, the scenery being very fine. To the west it was wild moorland, with rising hills in the distance, and eastward there were groves of lovely woods clothing the mountain-sides down to the edge of the sea.

After spending a short time at Rosstrevor, a most charming watering-place, we resumed our journey, my friend stopping at Dundalk, and I

proceeding to Dublin. Philips' last words to me as I left him standing on the platform were—

"Change that hat as soon as you get to Dublin."

## CHAPTER IX

### EARLY DAYS IN DUBLIN

DUBLIN, with its rain and sunshine, its processions and excitements, its absurdities and its genius, its incongruities of incident, the freshness of its accent and complexion of its people, must always capture a corner in the heart of all who visit it, for there is a glamour in its personality that must appeal to every sane mind.

I was fortunate enough to secure lodgings in the house of a typical Irish family named Macken, at 78, Charlemont Street. The landlord, a widower, had not the typical stature of his countrymen, for he was of short, slight physique, with a large head, bushy—abnormally bushy—eyebrows, and a pair of keen, piercing, shrewd, dark eyes that made up a face of unusual expression, and in argument concentrated all the passions to its aid in his denunciations and sarcasms on all and every subject. He was a hairdresser at Madam Worn's, and waited upon the vice-regal court, to attend to the toilettes of the vice-regal suite. He had one smart son, who was in the same profession, and had a business of his own. Another son, who was considered queer, and who played the violin execrably, a couple of pretty little girls, and an atrocious, good-natured servant named Maggie. They were all extremely kind to their English lodger, and from this stronghold I made up my mind to convert Dublin, and in

time, Ireland, to the importance of physical training for the Irish nation.

My first attempts were not encouraging, for although I walked on an average one hundred miles each week to the various educational and military establishments within twenty miles of the city, I failed to make any impression as to the importance of my work. I was, indeed, treated more as a deluded eccentric than one who possessed any merit in his schemes. This went on for weeks, then months, and evoked from my landlord strong denunciations on the short-sightedness of his race.

"It's one of the 'quality' ye'll have to get hold of, then, bad luck to them, they'll all follow like sheep," he remarked to me one day, his face full of expressive contempt.

"Perhaps it is my English accent," I hazarded.

"Well, it would be better if ye were French, and could spake the language, and shrug your shoulders, and behave like one of them chimpanzees that ye read about, then they'd follow right enough; it's a stick ye'd want to kape them off."

During these workless days, Ned, the queer son, would occasionally come into my room, approaching the hearthrug at the rate of one hundred yards per hour, accompanied as usual by his fiddle. He would look at me sorrowfully, while I went on reading, then, raising my head, I would say, "Well, Ned." Ned would collect his thoughts, and then reply—

"It's—a—pity—you're—not—of—the—true—faith."

"Why, Ned," I would answer, "what matter? There are many staircases into heaven."

After a pause of a couple of minutes, Ned would reply—

"There—is—a—door—at—the—top—of—every

—one—of—them—and—St.—Peter—has—the—keys."

"Well, I shall have to persuade one of our saints to borrow the keys from him."

"Ye—have—no—saint—and—no—angels—the—only—angel—in—heaven—is—an—Irishman—for—his—name—is—Michael—and—that's—Irish—sure—enough."

I would go on reading and forget his presence, then suddenly I would hear a mournful, dejected voice say very slowly—

"Would—ye—like—me—to—play—to—ye?"

Now, as Ned always took five seconds for each note, it always left me at a loss to comprehend the state of mind that inspired the soul of the composer in the treatment of his theme. I would, however, nod my head, and Ned, much gratified, would scrape very slowly a verse of "God save Ireland" or "The Wearing of the Green," or "Has sorrow thy young days shaded?" This last was always too much for me, and I would beckon Ned, to inform him that I felt an intense desire to kill somebody, and would commence opening my pocket-knife, or handling the poker. Then Ned would silently and sorrowfully withdraw into the shadows of the hall, and I would be left in peace until aroused perhaps by the Hibernian rhapsodies of red-headed Maggie, in her flirtations with the tradesmen at the front door, or her scolding objurgations to the itinerant beggar, who brought her from her cellar kitchen.

One day, when I was thinking of looking up my boat to return to England, I was passing College Green, when I came face to face with my divinity student friend that I had met in Glasgow. He appeared very pleased to see me, and walked with me up Sackville Street. I told him of my plans and failures. He unconsciously paraphrased

the opinion of my landlord, although in different phraseology.

"It will be all right—you only want influence to set the ball rolling, and it will become quite the fashion. Now, one of the most influential men in Dublin is a woman, by the way, Mrs. Edmund Dwyer Gray, wife of the M.P. and proprietor of the *Freeman's Journal*. Let us call and see her."

We called at Mrs. Gray's house in Middle Abbey Street. She was at home, and we were shown into a dainty drawing-room. In a couple of minutes Mrs. Gray, a splendid-looking woman, with large, beautiful, grey eyes, came in. After introducing me, and some small talk, my friend entered into the object of our visit. Mrs. Gray was charming, said she would herself write a paragraph in the *Freeman's Journal*, and after some more small talk, we took our leave.

Next day an article appeared in the *Freeman's Journal*, lamenting the terrible neglect of people to their physical training, glorifying the blessings which its practice provided, and welcoming with much gratification the advent of its great apostle, Alexander, temporary resident at 78, Charlemont Street, Dublin.

Next evening, a shy-looking youth, named Wayland, now the well-known Dublin surgeon, called upon me for lessons, and thus commenced a lifelong friendship. On the following morning I received a call from two gentlemen, one a Mr. Jameson, of the well-known firm of distillers, and a companion, who afterwards became ambassador for Great Britain at the court of Berlin. These two gentlemen were very anxious to learn a particular exercise upon the horizontal bar, and I made an appointment with them to take their first lesson on the next day at 3 p.m. After

they had gone, I reflected that I had no apparatus of the kind they required, but after obtaining Mr. Macken's sanction, I called upon a builder, and in a few hours I had the structure, a framework fifteen feet high, with an additional allowance of five feet to bury in the earth, dropped in the rear of Mr. Macken's house; but I could not persuade the workmen to bury the base of the framework in the ground, so borrowing a spade, I commenced the work myself, and at midnight I had only dug one trench, and as the gas went out at the meter at twelve, Mr. Macken hoped by that means to get me to go to bed; but I surreptitiously obtained many candles from red-haired Maggie, with which I illuminated the window of my inner room, and which looked out upon the once back garden. This done, I went out again to my task.

Then it commenced to rain, but all through the night I worked, until I had completed my job, and when Mr. Macken came down to his breakfast next morning, and saw the wonderful erection, with its foundations placed firmly in the ground, he nodded his head many times, and said—

"No wonder you English are at the top of the tree; ye could never get an Irishman to do the likes o' that, staying up all night in the rain, and without a drop of whisky to comfort him."

That evening there was a commotion at the front door; Mr. Macken was apparently holding an altercation with some person or persons, and when I heard my own name mentioned, I waited for some elucidation. I must mention that my apartments consisted of a couple of rooms on the ground floor, the front one looking out upon Charlemont Street, and the back divided by an inner door looking out upon the rear of the house. I now heard a gentle knock at the back

room door, and Mr. Macken looked in with a look of consternation upon him.

"There is a man at the front door," he commenced in a mysterious whisper, "and the likes of him ye never saw. It's seven feet high he is, and maybe more, built like a kangaroo or a long hairpin with a head on top, ye never saw the like."

"What does he want, Mr. Macken?"

"It's yourself he wants, to take lessons from ye; but he'd murder you, he couldn't help it."

"Show him into the front room, Mr. Macken."

"Well, if I can get him in, for he'll have to drop his head like a dromedary to do that same; and take my advice, sir, send him off, and have nothing to do with flesh and blood built like that."

I passed into the front room, and found my visitor to be a man of unusual height, probably about six feet eight or nine; he was gaunt and thin, which made him look taller. He introduced himself as a Trinity College student, and wanted, amongst other things, some lessons in boxing. Looking at the disparity in our heights, I commenced to doubt the wisdom of accepting him as a pupil, and vainly sought for a decent excuse to get rid of him. I told him I would be willing to teach him fencing, or any kind of physical training, but boxing——!

He, however, persevered, and I made an appointment for the following evening. Mr. Macken was thunderstruck when I informed him what I had done.

"It's suicide and assassination. Why can't the likes of him go and foight 'Madden's Baby'" (a well-known tall Dublin policeman), "or some other of them 'horneys'?"

I assured him it would be all right, but all to no purpose, and he left my room grumbling and very excitable. In a short time he re-appeared.

"I have it, sir," he said; "we will just place the big loo table in the centre of the room, and kape him at one side and you at the other, and if his arms are too long for ye, you will just rap the floor three times with your heel, and I'll come up in a jiffy, and order ye to stop, to prevent the floor coming through."

When my elongated pupil arrived on the following afternoon, when I saw him duck his head to escape the top of the doorway, as he entered my front room, and when I saw his towering figure collapse on to a chair, his great arms overhanging like the huge tentacles of an octopus, I thought my landlord's ideas about the loo table and the agreed-upon signal of three taps with the heel were sound and judicious, and as every good general prepares a safe retreat, I accordingly arranged the geography of the room, including a safe passage through my back apartment, in a discreet and tactical manner. Then I bade my new pupil draw up to one side of the loo table, I sitting opposite to him at the other. We then commenced a round-table conference, I doing most of the talking, my object being to draw him out, as to what experience he had had in the "noble art."

From his account, accompanied by a descriptive waving of the arms in dangerous proximity to my environment, he appeared to have a minimum of scientific knowledge, and a maximum of "rusting for a fight" policy. I then made a few rules which I considered wise and ingenious. The principal of these consisted of a signal on my part, to wit, the raising of my left hand high above my head, a sign for him to drop his arms to his sides. I explained that this was necessary so that I might correct his attack, and talk over the theory with him.

We then donned the gloves, and the wisdom of my special rule was soon apparent, for whenever he looked dangerous I gave the signal, down went his arms, and I had a few moments' conversation with him. But after all, he was not really dangerous, for like most inexperienced boxers, his attack only opened the way for a strong counter-attack. We therefore engaged in a very pleasant exchange of attack and defence, I being careful that his attacks landed in thin air, while mine went home. I thought this much was necessary in order to demonstrate my professional reputation, but after a while he got tired of the arrangement, and eventually, when one of my "taps" landed him rather severely at the base of his left ribs, he lost temporary control of himself, and lunged out at me. I had not time to give my signal, and as I considered that "absence of body," under certain conditions, was on a par with "presence of mind," I dodged, and he went sprawling over the loo table. He made a terrible clatter, and I was not surprised to see my landlord standing at the open door, a picture of injured landlordism, his eyes glaring with vindictive ferocity.

"Mr. Alexander," he said, suppressed passion ringing in his tone, "you'll have to leave these primises immediately, if not sooner, for you're destroying all the bricks and morthar; the house and the foundation's not safe, as for the plaster, it's dhropping all over my supper. Flesh and blood can't stand it, and you'll plaze pack up your things and go," and he stared wildly and defiantly at me.

"All right, Mr. Macken," I replied, soothingly; "this gentleman just tripped over the rug—quite an accident, I assure you."

"Quite," gasped the gentleman, panting.

"I don't think it will occur again, Mr. Macken. Stay for a few minutes, and see how gently we do it. Come and sit over here, near to the loo table."

"Yes, do, landlord," said my new pupil, "sit over there, and watch the fun."

Mr. Macken was scrutinising my person, to see if I had received any damage, and not perceiving any, he became partially mollified. He, however, sternly refused the seat near the loo table, and maintained his safer position at the door.

We resumed in a more gentle strain, giving and exchanging "taps," much to the delight of our one spectator, who encouraged and criticised us with great spirit. Once when my man looked dangerous, and I gave the signal, causing his arms to drop, the landlord was thunderstruck, and mentioned in a reminiscent tone that he had seen all the great boxers for the last half-century, but not one of them could touch me for my marvellous science and wonderful action.

"It bates Banagher," he added, "and that, ye know, bates the devil."

We parted on good terms, but I gave the remainder of the lessons at Trinity College gymnasium, and this gave me many pupils.

I appeared to have made a great impression upon my landlord. He was never tired of sounding my praises, and I once overheard him remark to the postman who brought my letters—

"Ah! he's a genius, a powerful genius, the likes of him you never saw. He was boxing a giant the other night, who made a murderous blow at him; then my lodger, he stepped on one side, and gave him a knock-down blow, just as if he were a baby, and I came up to see what the row was about, and I saw a terrible combat between them, and just as the big fellow was

going to commit murdher, my lodger put up his little finger, and down came the big one's arms helpless to his sides. Och ! it was wonderful."

"The English," said the postman, "are fine gentlemen, but I never knew they could box like your lodger, you say, does."

Very shortly after this I had another curious caller. Ned, the queer son, was serenading me outside my back window, with a tortoise-like rendering of the "Minstrel Boy," when Mr. Macken, knocking at the door, entered my room.

"A lady in the front room, sir," he whispered: "came in a side car and asked to see you, sir, and I said I would see if you were 'at home'."

I went into the front room, and a young lady of about twenty-five years was glancing up at a portrait of Daniel O'Connell as I entered the room. I bowed, and asked her to take a seat. She went into business immediately.

"I saw that notice of you the other day in the *Freeman's Journal*, and I want to know whether you can make an athlete of me?"

I glanced at her flushed, pretty face, and her equally pretty figure, slight, of medium height.

"I don't advocate athletics for——" I commenced.

"Whoy?" she interrupted, in the choicest Dublin accent.

"Athletics," I went on, "is rough work, only intended for the stern sex."

"I call that rubbish, now," she again interrupted. "Whoy can't we learn athletics the same as men?" and she looked indignantly at me.

"Men," I went on, "by reason of their business or profession, are partially trained, and the additional training would not hurt, but rather benefit them."

"Oh, I don't want football and harriers, and that sort of thing; I wouldn't be bothered with it. I only want to know how to box and fence and wrestle, and they say that you can cut an apple on a man's neck with one cut of the sword. Can you?"

I nodded.

"Well, I'd like to learn that."

I shook my head. "These are not useful exercises for ladies. I can teach you a few movements that might contribute to your health, but even that does not seem necessary."

"Well," she said, with a bright flash from her dark eyes, "I suppose I will have to tell you the reason. I'm going to be married, and I thought it would be fun if I could just manage my husband in every way. I would just love to be able to box him, and fence him, and wrestle him. As for cutting an apple on his neck, that would be lovely."

I was, however, obdurate, and shook my head, and ventured on one faint compliment.

"You have charms of your own," I said, "that will overcome your husband, or probably any other man that you care to exercise them upon, and if I were you, I would be content with these weapons, and leave the other coarser things to men."

She looked at me very hard, exercising the said weapons upon me. I stood fire; then she swept out of the room with—

"You are the same as the rest of them."

That night I wondered to myself what the fate of the lovely girl's husband would be, and hoped that I would not have many more ordeals of the kind to pass through.

## CHAPTER X

### UNCONSCIOUS IRISH HUMOUR

I NOW, such is fashion, was invited to give lectures and demonstrations at the principal colleges in the outskirts of Dublin. This, as the railways did not reach the parts I wished to visit, necessitated plenty of walking, but the neighbourhood of Dublin, when you get out of the city, is so fresh and interesting that the toil is made very light. The wooded roads of Stillorgan, where the ancestors of the Guinesses first commenced their distillery in a humble way, through the forest groves of Phœnix Park, or tree-clad sides of the Dublin Mountains, from where a magnificent view of the Irish Sea could be obtained, were all greatly appreciated by me in my itinerary.

As I could not bring any apparatus with me, I utilised a walking-stick, a couple of chairs, which I swung about my head, one in each hand, after the manner of Indian clubs, a table, and any common object that I thought would suit my purpose. I used to borrow the college carving knife, and having suspended an apple to the end of a walking-stick by a short length of cord, I would, with one cut, sever the cord, and then with another would sever the descending apple in halves before it had time to reach the floor. These, and similar feats, with an explanation of the physiology of the movement,

always seemed to interest my audiences, and in a short time I became the official physical trainer at these places. But as the distance was so great, and entailed, in addition to my exercises, so much labour, I conceived the idea of obtaining a bicycle from England, then quite an innovation. It arrived in due course, and I was very proud of it. It was called the "Defiance," and was manufactured by Messrs. Simpson & Sons, of Mansfield. The front wheel was the height of my shoulder, with a small trailing wheel at the back, and when it arrived, it became an object of very great interest to my landlord and his son Ned, the latter of whom looked at it in its stable behind the hall door eighteen hours out of the twenty-four. I learned to ride it at midnight, accompanied by my landlord, and whenever I appeared in the streets, I was followed by small crowds, who gazed at me in wonderment; and when I vaulted into the saddle, which I did without assistance from the step or treadle, I generally received a wild whoop of appreciation from the onlookers. It gave me a great delight to visit these colleges, and I think there existed much sympathy between myself and my pupils, many of whom afterwards obtained high positions in public life.

At St. Columba College I had as pupils the Pakenhams, Stephen Gwynne, afterwards M.P. for Galway, and Alfred Harmsworth, now Lord Northcliffe. My principal pupil at Castleknock was Ned Cullen, nephew of Cardinal Cullen, and now himself a high dignitary of the Church. At the training college for Irish schoolmasters, Drumcondra, I was treated with great consideration by the priests in charge, Father Petit and Father Bean.

The first-named had been a "hedge" school-

master, and had a dry humour which was delightful. Father Bean was also very pleasant and jolly. The pupils were drawn from the farming class, simple countrymen of tall physique, and their queries and comments to me were sometimes distinctly humorous. I had had part of the back garden of the college arranged as an outdoor gymnasium, and had constructed a vaulting horse of more than the average size, being about five feet high, two feet in width, and six feet in length. They called this brute "the Elephant," the "Dromedary," "Himself," and the "Zodiac," and as there was a portable spring-board attached, which enabled them to jump over more easily, it became a very popular piece of apparatus with them.

One day I set an exercise consisting of a flying leapfrog over the entire length, and then called them to attempt it, but no one stirred. There were whisperings in small groups, then they combined together, and harangues were delivered; then a small deputation of three hulking, awkward-looking natives approached me.

"Plaze, your honour," said one, "we're a deputation."

"It's a long journey over that beast," said the second.

"We'd hurt the animal if we dhropped on it," said the third.

I excused them, and then, in order to try them again, threw a flying somersault from the swinging rings at a considerable height. There were more whisperings, more harangues, and another deputation.

"Plaze, your honour," said one, "it's agin the rules of the college to break your neck."

"Maybe," said another, "we'll fly like that when we get to heaven."

"The bhoys," said the third, "think ye've got power from St. Michael to do them things."

Father Petit, who had been watching these proceedings, came out, and, with a merry twinkle in his grey eyes, wrapped his gown around his waist, and, to the astonishment and mortification of the boys, flew over the horse in gallant style.

"It will never do," said he, "for an Irishman to be afraid of anything;" and the example proved to be a very good precept, for there was not afterwards much hesitation.

On that particular evening Father Petit walked with me into the city. He had many dry stories to tell me of his students.

"They come to me very rough," he remarked, "but they leave very smooth."

As we walked down Sackville Street, men raised their hats, and women and little girls curtsied to him. One man stopped him and said—

"I hear, Father Petit, that you have now got a heretic on the staff at St. Patrick's."

"Better a good heretic than a bad Catholic," replied the priest; "and what do you say if we convert him to the true faith?"

"True for you, your Reverence, and that same you have the power given you to do, God save your Reverence," and the man marched off.

"That is a little criticism of your own good self," said Father Petit, turning to me, "and who knows but what it will come true."

"'There's a divinity that shapes our end, rough-hew them how we will,'" I quoted.

"'Heaven helps them who help themselves,'" he replied quickly.

"What was your parents' religion, Father Petit?" I asked.

"Why, Catholic, of course—what else could it be?"

"Then you followed your parents' religion?"

"Certainly; we all do."

"So do I, and mine were Protestants."

We both laughed. Passing the Gresham Hotel, an old beggar woman stopped us.

"Ah, your Riverence," she said, in a whining tone, "sure, me ould bones are not able to carry me ould body this morning."

"And, Biddy, sure my ould bones are not able to carry your ould body, either."

"Give us your blessing, and something along with it, your Riverence."

"Go to your own priest for your blessing, and for alms also."

He nevertheless gave her a trifle.

"Biddy is a well-known professional beggar, the town is full of them. Begging and drinking are our two curses. In one you lose self-respect, and the other, any brains that you might happen to have. Now, see all those idle fellows sitting on the plinth at the base of Nelson's Monument yonder, talking about everything they don't understand, making grievances, and cursing your country. Look at these boys here," indicating several groups of men who were vehemently discussing the headlines on the placards of the English newspapers outside a news shop at the corner of Earl Street. "Those blackguards ought to be working, not idling their time. Now I'm off; good-bye," and we parted.

I was tapped on the shoulder by some one. It was my divinity student friend.

"Well, how are you going on? I see you are making friends with the enemy."

"I'm getting along quite well, owing entirely to your interest and Mrs. Edmund Dwyer Gray's kindness."

"That's all right. Who is that priest that you were with?"

"That was Father Petit, head of the Irish Schoolmasters' College, where I now attend."

"Oh, is that so; well, he seemed to have a very benign countenance upon him."

"He is excellent in every way, cheerful, just, and good-natured."

"Oh, you'll find plenty like that, far more than you will in our ranks. Their followers are more pliant; ours are a stiff-backed generation." We parted at the bridge. "By the way," he said, "there's an 'at home' at the Constabulary Depôt, in Phœnix Park, next Tuesday. I want you to come up with me. There's a couple of beauties going to be there, and my brother, who is an inspector, has a bet on with another inspector that they paint, and you can decide it for them. I'll call for you at two. Good-bye."

Walking across the bridge, and thinking of this new responsibility, I met one of my pupils, a man named Martin.

"How do you do?" I said.

He made no reply, but turned round and walked back with me.

"A fine day," I suggested. He still made no reply. "I hope you are not stiff after your exercises; you must be careful not to get a chill on the muscles."

He still persisted in his silence, but after we had cleared the bridge, and gone a few yards along Westmorland Street, he stopped me.

"I make a practice never to talk when on that bridge, or anywhere near the Liffey. It's the most disgraceful, insanitary, filthy, muddy, odorous compound that man ever suffered from, especially if that man has a delicate, and perhaps

valuable, organ in his body. Now I want to talk to you about that organ."

"Is it your heart, lungs, or voice-box, you are talking about?"

"It's the latter," he said, with a slight, husky cough. "I expect to do great things with it, and want to know the best way to go about it."

"I'm afraid I know nothing about singing; you should consult an expert."

"That's just it, I have consulted two already."

"Well, what did they say?"

"Well, the first professor, he said that I had a voice that one of these days would startle the world."

"And the other?"

"Well, the other was Grattan Kelly, of St. Patrick's. He asked me to run up the scale, and just as I finished, a man who was selling oysters in the street chimed in with his cry of oysters. 'D'you hear that man?' said Grattan. 'Well, that man has a much better voice than you have.' 'Holy Moses,' said I, 'you don't say so.' 'Half a guinea,' says Grattan, holding out his hand. I paid him his fee, and what I want to know is, which of these two professors I am to believe?"

I promised to consider the point, and discuss it with him at his next lesson.

I continued my walk homeward, getting a salute from "Madden's Baby," Dublin's huge policeman, as I passed the college. I glanced at the statues of Burke and Goldsmith, and tried to reconcile their genius with the everyday life of the capital. I walked up Grafton Street, and admired the beautiful women that were admiring the beautiful shops. I got a sniff of mignonette as I passed St. Stephen's Green, and wondered what the inscrutable charm of Dublin really was.

It was so complex, so incongruous, and I was far from reaching a solution when I arrived at my lodgings.

When I went in I found Ned Macken holding a conversation over Ireland's dead patriots with a gentleman who had called to see me. He proved to be the French Consul, who wanted to make an arrangement with me to practise fencing with him, an art to which he was much addicted.

"Ah, monsieur! since I leave France, I have no one that I practise ze foils with. I ask your assistant here," indicating Ned with a nod, "that he give me one opportunity of practice with him, but he says that his art is ze grande music."

"If—ye—would—like—I'll—play—'God—save—Ireland'—for—the—gentleman."

I asked Ned to postpone the treat, and go down to the kitchen and inform Marguerite that I had arrived home. I then made my arrangements with the Consul; he, like most of his countrymen, had a most charming manner, and proved to be quite a good swordsman.

One of my expert pupils about this time was Mr. Harvey Du Cros, afterwards M.P. for Hastings, and chairman of the Pneumatic Tyre Company. He was a most enthusiastic athlete, and excelled in all branches of sport. Together we organised and established the Dublin Gymnasium, with its headquarters at the Dublin Exhibition. Lord Ardilaun was our President, I acted as Director, and Mr. Du Cros was the Hon. Secretary; and together we did our best for the young men of Dublin from the athletic point of view. We had one end of the huge glass building fitted up as a gymnasium, not forgetting to have a "Jumbo" vaulting-horse. Foreseeing that the spring-board might assist in throwing the members over in various unexpected attitudes, the problem was

how to make provision for possible accidents. We thereupon ordered a giant mattress, about fifteen feet square, and two feet six inches thick. It arrived empty, and was packed with straw by "Fagan," our attendant. It looked truly enormous when finished, and I conceived the notion of gratifying an ambition that I had long had.

This was to turn a "double somersault" from the spring-board in the air before alighting on to my feet on the mattress. I was already proficient in throwing "single" somersaults, a feat that is not very difficult to any practised athlete, the method consisting of taking a run, beating the spring-board with both feet, diving into the air, and when there, doubling up the body like a ball, counting one, two, and then straightening out again, which, if all went well, would bring you into an upright position on to the feet. I therefore reasoned out that if I put more effort into everything, and held my body doubled up for double the time, *i.e.* until I had counted four, then straightened the body out, I ought to score all right.

I thereupon went down on the following morning to put my plan into execution. There was no one about, and hastily donning my gymnastic costume, I attempted with great enthusiasm my latest idea.

* * * * *

When I came to, and recovered my wandering senses, I lay still and wondered where I was. I felt as if all my bones were broken; my teeth were gnashed together in agony. I kept quiet for a little time, then things came back to me, and I went home when I was able, feeling rather sad, nor was I comforted by Ned offering to play "Has sorrow thy young days shaded?" for me.

Later on, I took a hot bath, a rub down, and went to bed, trying to reason out my failure.

Then like a flash it all came to me ; the second turn would necessarily be slower than the first turn, and I had not allowed sufficient time to complete the second turn. I ought to have counted not four, but five or six; a fraction of a second is very important sometimes. So on the following morning, feeling quite fit again, I renewed my experiment, and this time with complete success. I was, in fact, so elated with my success, that when I went home I allowed Ned Macken to play his own adaptation of " Brian Boru."

## CHAPTER XI

### ADVENTUROUS BICYCLE JOURNEY

I HOPE I may be forgiven if I refer here to another physical feat, the accomplishment of which I had striven after for many years, viz. to place one finger in a ring suspended about seven feet from the ground, and by the aid of the finger alone, raise my body up until my chin was on a level with the finger. I also achieved the still more difficult feat of raising my body into a horizontal position known to athletes as *la planche*, by the aid of one finger only. These feats, especially the latter, I understand, still hold the record, and have not been accomplished by any other athlete, amateur or professional.* There is an excellent reason for this which I must explain.

While yet a young apprentice at the Liverpool Gymnasium, my ambition was fired by seeing various professionals raise themselves from the ground by the aid of one arm only. I determined,

* W. Bankier (Apollo), in his chapter on historical strong men in "Ideal Physical Culture," says: "I only know of one man who can raise the entire weight of his body (10 stones) by the aid of one finger, namely, Mr. A. Alexander (Principal of the Southport Physical Training College). Mr. Alexander not only performs this voluntarily a couple of times in succession, but also performs the still more extraordinary feat of raising his body into the horizontal position, known as *la planche*, by the aid of one finger alone. This has never been equalled, and I am quite sure that Mr. Sandow is not able to perform the same feat with one hand, let alone one finger."—*Publisher's note.*

therefore, in my youthful vanity, to out-do this feat by raising my body with the aid of one finger only. At the commencement I had difficulties. I could not bear the weight of my body by one finger, and when I managed to develop my finger to enable me to do this, the skin used to break and bleed. I therefore oiled it well, to make the skin more pliable, and practised a special movement with the finger each day, until it gradually became very strong, but it was quite ten years before I attained my object. I was now, therefore, quite pleased with myself that I had accomplished the maximum of physical strength, and together with my double somersault, the maximum of physical activity. I was all the more pleased because in my studies I had read that the body might be developed into moderate strength and moderate activity, but could never obtain the maximum in both cases.

La Grange, the French physiologist, has also made the definite statement, that no man can perform a feat of strength and smile at the same time, but I think I proved that he was wrong.

About this time the military authorities in Ireland held a tournament at the Dublin exhibition, one of the competitions being the Military Gymnastic Championship. The instructors were brought from the various military centres of the United Kingdom, including their champion, Sergeant-Major Hughes, of the Sheffield district. I was invited to compete in this contest, the conditions being that each competitor in rotation would set various exercises in strength, skill and agility, which the others also attempted. I was lucky enough to come out top scorer, with 129 points; Sergeant-Major Hughes being second, with 85 points. On the marks being read out, the large audience appeared greatly pleased, and

I was carried shoulder-high by some of my excited pupils. I also received the congratulations of my splendid opponents. I received as my prize a gold medal, and the committee generously placed two gold bars on the riband in special recognition of the feats mentioned by me. The Irish Champion Athletic Club also awarded me their gold medal as acknowledgment of my work on that occasion.

When I returned home to my lodgings, my landlord, who had been present with his son Ned, gave me an enthusiastic welcome, and Ned gave me musical honours until the small hours. A few days afterwards, when walking down Grafton Street, I saw my photo in the shop window of Messrs. Laurence, stuck between Madame Patti, the famous singer, and Calcraft, the hangman, other celebrities being at either side of us, and all at the modest sum of sixpence each.

I now tried to persuade my pupil, Mr. Harvey Du Cros, to learn to ride the bicycle. He shook his head for some time, but at length I got him mounted on my machine, and in a very short time he mastered it. He then purchased a new machine, and we made up our minds to go on a bicycle tour down to the South of Ireland, around Killarney, coming up on the west coast to Limerick, then across the mainland, back to Dublin. We had made our arrangements to start on a particular day, and as the bicycle was a decided novelty, I am not sure if these two machines were not the only two machines in Ireland at that time. When, therefore, our project became known, it occasioned some excitement. Some said that we would ride a few miles out, and back again; others that we would be swallowed up in the soft bogs, or fall over the cliffs in the Killarney Mountains; and to finish up, our meteorological friends mentioned

that the date we had chosen for starting was St. Swithin's Day.

The last doleful prophecy was, alas! only too true, and when the momentous day arrived, it rained very heavily. When I announced our intention to my landlord, he looked at me with suppressed excitement, and with a nod of his head said—

"If you said you were going to heaven on a bicycle, I'd belave you, but—shure, it's raining flat irons now, and ye'll get lost in the bogs, for there's no proper roads in Ireland."

Mr. Du Cros, however, arriving, we had a short consultation, and decided to go, and as we mounted our machines, my landlord raised his hands in pious horror, and Ned crossed himself for our safe return. In ten minutes we were both wet through, but unheeding this, we plodded on. Mr. Du Cros, being a native, had arranged the route, but whether we went that route or not I cannot say, all that I am sure of is that we wheeled wearily on against strong head winds, and a deluge of rain, for three days, staying each night wherever we could get shelter; a most difficult matter, by the way, for whenever people saw us, they flew inside their houses, shrieking, barring the doors behind them. Strong men trembled and turned pale at our approach, and it must have been trying to their nerves to see a couple of phantom riders coming towards them in a cloud of rain, and silently disappear in the mist.

On the third day we suddenly came upon a Royal Irish constable. He was a tall, fine man, and as we came rather suddenly upon him, and dismounted to inquire our way, he drew his sword, and stood on the defensive.

"All right, sergeant," said I, "which is the way to Killarney?"

He did not reply, but backed his way gradually towards the barracks door.

"It's all right, sergeant, have you never seen these things before? They come from England, and are called velocipedes."

He was pale and absolutely shaking with fear. Mr. Du Cros now came up, and spoke reassuringly to him.

"Holy St. Michael," he at length ejaculated, "it's quare things they have in England. I have often heard of philosiphers, but, Holy St. Patrick, that's the first time I ever saw one."

Nor could we restore his confidence, and when we tried to get shelter or refreshments, we could get neither, for the villagers had already locked themselves in, and when I went down the steep hill, feet over the handles, like a crouching tailor, the rain pelting down as usual, the constable gave vent to his feelings by a loud whoop.

At the foot of the hill, about a couple of miles down, there was a national school. I saw the school-mistress at the door, surrounded by her pupils, and as it was a cross-roads, I hoped to get some information from her; but when they saw us approaching, they screamed out "Banshee," and flew into the school, barring the door, as usual, behind them. I dismounted and knocked at the door, but I could not induce them to open it, the only reply that I could get being the wailing of the children behind the barred door. When Mr. Du Cros arrived we had a short consultation as to which road we should take, and finally decided to risk one to the right, going westward.

Then followed another weary pilgrimage, the rain at last coming down so heavily that we could only see a few yards in front of us, and our

presence, whenever seen, was the signal for many shrieks from the human kind, stampeding of horses, and barking of dogs, the latter indeed being the only creatures who showed any courage.

We arrived at last at a wayside inn, with a large signboard over the door, bearing the words "Entertainment, P. Delaney." Taking the precaution of leaving our machines outside, we entered the house, and going immediately to a large turf fire in the kitchen, inquired of the landlord, a middle-aged man, who had the appearance of a marooned tradesman, if we could have dinner?

"Yes, sorr," he replied, "and whatever yez would like to ordher, and it's soaking ye are, which a dhrop of whisky will soon make ye right."

Mr. Du Cros tested the extent of his menu by ordering one after the other many fancy dishes, all of which the landlord apologised for not having ready. We decided on a roast fowl, but when I saw the landlady with a knife in her hand running after a screaming, fluttering hen, I countermanded the order, and said we would be content with bacon and eggs. These were soon forthcoming, and as we sat, smoking with steam at the peat fire, eating our welcome repast, the puzzled landlord came in and made some inquiries as to the nature of our machines. In our replies we were obliged to be most careful not to raise any suspicions on his part that we belonged to the mystic or uncanny atmosphere, for the natives are very superstitious, and if they imagined we were enemies to the Church or to Ireland, escaped from the other world, and riding on wheels in their midst, our lives would not have been worth much.

We explained, therefore, that the bicycle was a new idea invented by Isaac Butt, the Irish patriot, in order to save labour on the part of horses, and extortion on the part of jarveys; that everybody in Dublin was using them, or going to use them.

But when he saw us mount and disappear in the misty rain he gave a loud demoniacal yell, which might have meant either a blessing or a curse.

We rode on through the quagmire, unable to see more than a few yards ahead, and getting wet through in the course of a few minutes. After a couple of hours of this kind of enjoyment, we commenced to gradually ascend higher and higher, now and then having to dismount, then remount, ride for a short distance, and dismount again. We saw no one from whom we could inquire our way, but, judging from little screams and barring of doors, assumed that as soon as our presence had been discovered, a hasty retreat had been made.

This went on for a considerable time, until we came to what was apparently the summit, and as this was a cross-roads, we dismounted to try and find out our whereabouts. Suddenly the rain, which had pursued us from Dublin, commenced to cease, the sky grew lighter, until at last the sun burst out, and disclosed to our astonished vision great sheets of water, shining like opals, some distance below, dotted here and there with tiny islands covered with fresh, emerald verdure. Beyond, from the water's edge, rose up magnificent mountains, clothed in every conceivable and ever-changing colours, now purple, now ruby, now amethyst and amber. It was a beautiful sight; the sun shining on the dripping foliage created a gauze, lace-like veil,

which, lifting now and then, revealed myriads of sparkling reflections in fantastic shape and colour.

We looked on breathless. Neither of us had ever seen Nature to such perfection before. Suddenly we heard a stir in the bushes close to us, and saw a ragged little specimen of humanity trying to hide himself from our view. We called to him, but he would not answer, and it was only the magic chink of coin which made him peep out and reason that we were only mortal after all. We spoke cheerfully to him and gave him something, whereupon he became friendly, and pointed out our way. It appeared that we had to descend a mountainous road, very steep, for about three miles.

Mr. Du Cros countenanced walking down with our machines; but, with the impetuosity of youth, I sprang into the saddle, and crouching into my favourite attitude when descending hills, I scorched and bumped down at a pace which would have won any championship on the level. When Mr. Du Cros joined me, we proceeded to the Railway Hotel, and made ourselves presentable. As the sun was still shining, we decided to take a tour of the lakes, and lunch at Innisfallen. We accordingly drove to the head of the upper lake, where boatmen were awaiting us.

We went through this splendid reach of water, admiring the wonderful panoramic effects of the mountains, and amused by the boatmen at the "Echo Hills," who lustily called out—

"Long life to your mother-in-law!"

This evidence of domestic felicity was instantly taken up by the opposite hill and then by other hills one after the other, until the sentiment appeared to be quite enthusiastic.

We safely got through the Torc Cataract, and then sped on to Innisfallen, surely the most beautiful of all islands, "fallen" indeed from heaven. The colouring of the foliage was amazing in its richness, especially that of the arbutus, which was very rich and unique in its fruit. We lunched on the tiny strand, sapphire-hued wavelets breaking at our feet. We had an excellent lunch, with plenty for our boatmen, and had for dessert some of the beautiful arbutus berries, something like plump cherries in shape, and strawberries in colour and flavour.

As we rowed across the lake, the hot sun was calling up columns of steam from the water spirits of the mighty deep, which stalked across in spectral hosts, partially hiding from our view the wonderful array of beauty on the mountain sides. Then the clouds lowered, and looked ominous.

"This weather," I remarked to Mr. Du Cros, "appears to me very like the Irish character, morose and depressed, but lit up with warmth and imagination."

"Yes, I think it is so. A wet climate must have a damping effect upon the character of the people, but when all is sunshine it reacts in the opposite direction."

Our boatmen were pulling away with a will, and only reached the shore in time to escape a storm of rain and wind. The mountains became shrouded in grey mist, and the placid lake soon became a tumultuous sea.

That evening at dinner I sat next to the Roman Catholic Bishop of Limerick, a very dignified and somewhat austere personage, who, however, unbended a little later on, and joined in our conversation, showing great interest in

our journey. He was the only other Irishman present, the rest of the visitors being American tourists.

As the weather continued to be unfavourable, Mr. Du Cros suggested that we should return to Dublin by train; but I told him that I had a growing reputation to keep up, and did not care to risk any gibes or sarcasms on my return.

We went out to examine our machines. Our solid tyres were firm, but had several cuts which required mending. The saddles had been reduced to a pulp, and were now in unpleasant ridges. We effected these mendings, but as the weather continued very black and heavy, Mr. Du Cros finally determined to return by train, and I, after saying good-bye to my pleasant companion, once more mounted and wheeled, in a downpour of rain, towards Limerick.

When I had cleared Killarney about a couple of miles, I found the road quite impassable. Several hundreds of navvies were in possession, making a tramway, or a light railway, I am not sure which. The road was cut up and unridable, so I was obliged to carry my machine for several miles over a very muddy surface, and it was not until I was close to Tralee, some thirteen miles away, that I got clear of the mud. Indeed, for the whole of that day the rain fell in a steady downpour, and I did not arrive at Limerick until late in the evening. I created some stir at the hotel, but I speedily retired to my bedroom, and after a cold sponge and rough towel I retired to bed, having supper there, and sending my clothes down to the kitchen to get dried.

In the morning the waiter called attention to the fact that my clothes were much blood-stained in several parts, and advised a rest for

a day or two before proceeding to Dublin. After breakfast, however, I purchased some pads of wadding to soak up any bleeding, and proceeded on my way, the rain once more being my only companion. It was a most melancholy journey, for the roads were overgrown with grass and weeds, and the rain prevented my seeing the beauties of the country, or indeed anything else. I plodded on, however, having to renew my pads, until darkness overtook me, then obtained shelter for the night in a cottage by the roadside, after having considerable difficulty in persuading the small farmer and his wife, who owned the cottage, that I was not a spirit or a banshee, but only a very ordinary personage, wet through and through with the "soft" weather of ould Ireland.

The next morning, after partaking of a hearty breakfast, I proceeded amidst much rain on my journey, and reached Dublin about noon on the Saturday, having taken a week to perform the circular run of between four and five hundred miles.

My landlord was overjoyed to see me safe and sound, and Ned looked at me with astonishment, as if, indeed, I was an uncanny being. He gave all the praise of the exploit to the bicycle, which I regarded as a modern Bucephalus, worthy of any panegyric he might give.

Amongst my correspondence there was a letter from a friend stating, amongst other items, "If you come back, and are not killed, come and join our boating party this afternoon at the end of the North Wall; but if you are killed, and don't come back, never mind." I thereupon went to the North Wall, and nearly met with my death there, for we had no sooner rowed out into midstream when suddenly a L. & N.W.

passenger boat to Holyhead nearly ran us down ; we were grazed, and one of our party thrown into the river, but all's well that ends well, and we had quite a pleasant boating expedition afterwards in the beautiful bay of Dublin.

## CHAPTER XII

### NOTHING VENTURE NOTHING WIN

The Dublin Exhibition was a huge glass building, and quite one of the ornaments of the city. In it all the great concerts, entertainments, and fêtes were held. One day Mrs. Edward Guinness, Lady Iveagh, whose nephew, the Hon. W. L. Plunkett, now Lord Plunket, Governor of New Zealand, was a pupil of mine, showed me over a portion of the building, which he had had transformed into a ballroom. It looked like a palace of dazzling delight. I am incapable of describing it, but fancy the four seasons were enumerated in the design, and it must have cost a tremendous lot of money. It was the talk of the town at the time.

Sir Edward Lee, the Secretary of the exhibition, asked me to assist him in arranging some entertainments, and as my ideas were large in this direction, I made him very nervous by engaging the Grenadier Guards band to give a band concert, with various accessories in singing, with one or two freaks, including Chang, the Chinese Giant, the Siamese Twins, etc.

"We shall be ruined," Sir Edward remarked to me, "you have far exceeded a prudent expenditure."

But the result proved the reverse, for the entertainments brought record houses, and filled the building to overflowing. After this, my services were much requisitioned. Michael and

John Gunn, proprietors of the "Gaiety" and "Theatre Royal" often consulted me, especially in regard to spectacular effects when they were producing any great piece. On another occasion I organised a children's fête at the exhibition, in which children's exhibits were shown, athletic sports organised, the whole finishing up with a grand triumphal march.

This item was a great success, five thousand children, with Archbishop Peacock and many clergy at their head, and preceded by a military band, marched up and down, longitudinally, diagonally, in serpentines, in circles, and many other curious figure designs, the children singing in unison during their progress. I directed the movements from an elevation, having a large gong from which I gave signals to the leaders of the various sections. It produced a very pleasing effect, and Archbishop Peacock afterwards congratulated me upon its novelty and success.

I was now appointed Professor of Gymnastics at Trinity College, a position which I held for some years. I had amongst my pupils many men, including the Provost, who have since made their mark in the world in public affairs, and whose temperament at this particular time seemed more bent on mischief than intellectual distinction.

It would not be proper for me to relate these episodes, but I can remember one student, who is now a conspicuous politician, throwing a firework into the Vice-regal carriage as it passed the college. The occupants were the Duke and Duchess of Marlborough, and Lord Randolph Churchill; the latter picked up the lighted squib and threw it into the street. Unfortunately it went off underneath the horses of the cavalry escort, producing a small stampede, the author of the mischief looking on, innocent and serious,

as he does when he is delivering a speech in Parliament.

I had the honour and pleasure, if it was an honour and a pleasure, to join in the last "town and gown" fight. These affairs were looked forward to every year, as a safety valve for the exuberance of the students. There was a little blood spilled, but nothing very serious, and the Provost and fellows finally stopped it.

There used to be great enmity between Larrisey, Dublin's huge policeman, and the students, who were always trying to play him pranks. I once saw a very small student, he did not reach five feet, who was much the worse for liquor, stop before Larrisey and proceed to address him, with many hiccoughs intervening, in a Latin oration. As its meaning did not seem to pierce the intellect of the giant official, the little man descending to Irish, said—

"Why don't you spake, ye blithering light-house?"

Larrisey looked down on the midget mortal, and with a dignified wave of the hand, ordered him off.

"Is it me ye are ordering away (hiccough). Then I challenge ye (hiccough), and if you're as big as the (hiccough) tower of Babel (hiccough) I'd fight ye;" and proceeding to put his threat into execution, he made a violent attack upon Larrisey's shins with his tiny boots.

Larrisey looked down upon him sorrowfully, then, stretching out his huge hand, caught the little man somewhere at the back of the neck and swung him under his left arm, marching him off, with much kicking and gesticulating, to the police station. On another occasion I saw Larrisey take off two students in this fashion, one under each arm. I think his height was six feet seven inches.

He was powerfully built, and it was reported of him that his bedroom was so small at the barracks that he was obliged to have his feet out of the window. I told the college porter one day to tell him that a gentleman in the gymnasium would very much like to have a bout with the gloves with him, and suggesting a strong inducement. While getting into flannels, I heard Larrisey patrolling the wooden floor, and humming a popular air to himself, and I wondered if I should escape out of this bout with a sound head. When, however, I made my appearance, ready for the fray, Larrisey stared at me, then, with high disdain, said—

"So ye are the gentleman, are ye? Then good morning to ye," and taking the gloves off his brawny hands, threw them on the floor, striding out of the gymnasium in high dudgeon. As for me, I was thankful for my lucky escape.

The Dublin Police are perhaps the finest body of men in the world, of magnificent physique. They are, considering the annoyance they have occasionally to put up with from the populace, an extremely good-natured set of men, keen on improving themselves, body and mind, and there was always present with them a spirit of competition. On one occasion the men attended a class at Kevin Street Barracks for Ambulance and First Aid. The doctor who lectured, however, found some difficulty in making them understand the meaning of the term coagulation, and also to pronounce the word correctly, "confabulation" being their general pronunciation. But the doctor was a patient man, and gradually made them understand the importance of the coagulation of the blood.

"Corpuscles," he remarked, "or any atoms

which adhere externally are going through the process of coagulation."

A few nights after this, some medical students, including the doctor himself, were standing in a group at the corner of Dane Street, when a tall policeman strolled languidly up to them, and said officially—

"Now then, gentlemen, yez can't coagulate here, but must dissolve at once."

The little group were so astonished, that they instantly dissolved.

I was walking with some students down Grafton Street one afternoon, and at the corner of Nassau Street they stopped a pleasant-featured man, who, it appeared, was a distinguished amateur singer, and to whom they barefacedly introduced me as a distinguished musical critic from London, and suggested that we should all adjourn to the musical room at Piggot's music shop, so that I might hear his voice, and express my views upon it. Now, as I did not understand, and I don't yet, a note of music, I thought this rather premature, and was proceeding to say so, when I received various winks and nudges, and had accordingly to fall in with their humour. We therefore went to Piggot's, and going upstairs to the music chamber, they seated me at one end in a position of state, arranging themselves around me, and asking the singer to retire to the other end of the room and warble. I found, to my dismay, that the man had a splendid voice, and was quite beyond any criticism of mine. He first ran up the scale, then an Italian aria, then an English ballad; after this one of the students got up, and gravely suggested we should finish up with a comic song. The vocalist sang "Molly Bawn," in which we all joined lustily, and I was then called upon to give my criticism. In some

temerity I commenced, first of all explaining that the smallness of the room prevented the assimilation and articulation of the words being properly appreciated, but I gave high praise to the resonance and timbre of his voice, and after suggesting some hints in stage deportment, of which I knew very little, I prognosticated a brilliant career for him. As a matter of fact, this actually came to pass, for although he was only a bank clerk at that time, Leslie Crotty afterwards filled the leading parts in Carl Rosa's English Opera Company, and whenever he met me afterwards, never failed to thank me for the kind encouragement I gave him.

The students at times were most incorrigible. I was standing with a few of them at the college gates one morning, when a young lady who was passing accidentally dropped a portion of her attire. This was technically known at the time as a "bustle," and was intended to accentuate a graceful contour of the waist at the lumbar region. One of the students ran after her, and with the grace of an Adonis, offered her the article. She, apparently not having missed it, was very indignant, and hurried on, whereupon he offered it to many other young women he passed, all of whom refused it indignantly. Another student then hung it upon the railings, to which he attached a piece of paper bearing the words, "Bustle, bustle, ye idle, lazy-pated varlets," a quotation, I think, from Byron's "Mazeppa."

I now became Physical Training Advisor to the Dublin Metropolitan Police and the Royal Irish Constabulary, and in this way gained many friends, and more pupils than I could very well undertake.

One day I heard the red-headed one at my lodgings arguing the point with somebody at

the front door, and as I heard my name mentioned I stepped out into the passage and found a handsome-looking officer interrogating our domestic.

I at once recognised him as Lord Randolph Churchill, and going to the door, invited him to step into my front room. He came in, criticising the maid. He told me that the Duchess of Marlborough was desirous of getting up a big athletic affair at the Exhibition in aid of some charity. There were to be four military bands, and they would like the programme to consist of drill, military and athletic exercises, and they were anxious to know if I would undertake its organisation. After obtaining a few more particulars I gave the required promise.

Lord Randolph Churchill at this time was rather thin, a little above the medium height, with quick, alert, expressive features, and a somewhat formidable moustache which turned up at each end. Altogether he presented a very striking appearance. He confined his conversation with me to athletic matters, mentioning that he had heard of me, and asking permission to feel my muscles. He then invited me to examine his own, which I did, and pronounced to be a little flaccid. He said he was very keen on getting strong, and that he would also be glad if I would give him a few tips in boxing. This I did, and he afterwards called a couple of times for me to renew my instructions.

I found him an exceedingly pleasant man, fond of Irish stories, and he would laugh heartily over any that I happened to relate, and in turn would give me one or two of his own. After his departure on his first visit, I took Maggie to task for keeping him waiting at the front door.

"If," said I, "any gentleman calls to see me,

please show him into the front room, ask his name, and inform me of his presence."

"All right, sorr, I'll not forget: an' it's very tidy I'll kaap the room, when ye have such grand gintlemen calling to saa ye."

The very next day I heard Maggie opening the door of the front room, and ushering some one in. She then hurried along and informed me "that a gintleman wished to saa me." I went to the front room, and found a member of a German band there. True, he had bright buttons and some lace on his uniform, and he gravely saluted me, then held out his box. I gave him something and he gave me another salute, then turning on his heel, made his exit.

Maggie was my undoing on another occasion. I had, after much cogitation, come to the conclusion that I had fairly exhausted the principles and practice of strength and activity, and ought now to ascertain if I could develop my brains to a successful issue. I thereupon wrote a somewhat bulky article, and sent it to a London magazine. Maggie posted it for me, but as time passed on, and I received no reply, I cross-examined Maggie as to where she had posted it. It now appeared that she, with a keen perception of possible trouble for the reading public, had posted my article in the erection very properly termed the rubbish bin. It was a structure somewhat resembling the pillar-box, but as Maggie put it, "It had a wider mouth, sorr." So, after all, my first article reached its proper destination.

In the meantime Mr. Du Cros and I proceeded with the organisation of the fête. I was determined to introduce as many novelties as I possibly could into the programme, and for the first time present on a large scale musical drill to the public. As we could not afford the continual attendance

of a band or pianist, I rehearsed the men by whistling the tunes, and sometimes humming a well-known air, but as this was fagging work for one man to undertake, I invited the men to accompany me in whistling and singing. This they did, and it had such a pleasing effect that I determined to carry out the exercises with this novel kind of accompaniment.

When the great night arrived, everything went off very well, but when we came to what I considered was going to be the tit-bit of the evening, the men appeared to have stage fright, and they went through the first few movements to a doleful solo by myself, which sounded weird and melancholy in the vast building. I thereupon stopped them, and after uttering some caustic remarks, we recommenced the drill; this time it was a complete success, and the men sang well-known Irish airs to their movements, and whistled to others in a most creditable style. It seemed to give great pleasure to the audience, for they were quite enthusiastic, and persisted in helping us out with the choruses.

Lord Randolph Churchill presented me to the Duke and Duchess of Marlborough, who expressed their delight at everything they had seen.

The result of this experiment of whistling and singing in marching and drill movements was so satisfactory, that I wrote to Lord Wolseley, and suggested that, as the accompaniment of whistling and singing seemed to give so much pleasure to the participants, and certainly lessened fatigue and contributed to precision of action, he would make an order, allowing its use in the army.

He replied that he could not see his way to do so, as he thought it rather an undignified proceeding. I, however, urged that there could be no loss of dignity if it lessened the fatigue of

the men and created a cheerful environment. He wrote again, stating that he would permit it on route marching, which he accordingly did, and the practice is now much appreciated by the troops.

Shortly after this I was spending the week-end at Banagher, and met there at the Rectory a very charming young lady, who on being apprised of my profession, told me in subdued tones about the sad death of a young athlete which took place under tragic circumstances a couple of weeks before at Sligo. Now, as I had been at Sligo at that time, and knew all the prominent athletes, I ventured, with much diffidence, to question the incident.

"Oh," she replied, "it is quite true; I have kept the report from the paper, because he was a friend of my cousin Tom at Trinity."

She thereupon ran out of the room, returning in a couple of minutes with a newspaper cutting which she handed to me, and in which I read for the second time my own obituary.

When I explained that my accident at Sligo, although severe at the time, only put me out of action for two or three days, she looked at me with a kind of awe, and said—

"How very unpleasant for you to read your own obituary!"

To which I replied, "Oh, it doesn't affect me at all, I am getting quite used to it."

## CHAPTER XIII

### TRAMPING IN THE WEST

THE long vacations and other school holidays in Ireland enabled me to indulge in my favourite recreation of itinerant travel. I have travelled from north to south, east to west, and all round the coast-line of Ireland. Later on I followed out this plan in the United Kingdom also, keeping to the road and on foot as much as possible; and if any one wishes to study the character of their countrymen, or to see the beauties of their country's scenery, I would recommend this plan.

Sometimes I had companions, and often I travelled alone, meeting with many incidents and adventures which have laid the foundation of a lively retrospection. I found the Irish people on the whole a brave and chivalrous race, their natural heritage, I believe, if they were only left alone and not exploited by agitators and others who thrive upon their simple ignorance of facts. Their school history books emanate from biased publishers, and they are taught to believe that the English people are all descendants of their arch enemy, Oliver Cromwell. The "Curse of Cromwell" is, indeed, the most deadly curse they can hurl at you. But foul words don't break bones, or my funeral would have taken place long since.

I was once travelling in County Clare, and stayed in a lonely cottage for the night. I had not long retired to rest when a big Irishman forced himself into my bedroom, and invited me to fight. As he was the worse for liquor I took no notice of him; but he continued to revile me for a cursed Sassenach, and once, at least, his stick whizzed unpleasantly over my features. I was just about to rise and argue the point physically with him, when his wife came in and dragged him from the room, saying that I was "a nice young gentleman from Ameriky."

On another occasion I was travelling with a companion in the Limerick district. In a weak moment we decided to attend a political meeting at Garryowen. The meeting was of the usual description, the orators—they were orators—vilifying all those who differed from them, and rousing up the passions of their listeners by their extravagant references to the hated English. My friend, who was an Englishman, was very wrath at these aspersions, and said so to me in a pronounced Manchester dialect. Then the crowd commenced to hustle us. We were separated, and I was knocked down by, I think, a brick on my right shin-bone. Then a wild native rushed at me with a heavy stick, and made a blow at my head. I carried at the time a hunting whip with a brass crop, and as I lay on my back I parried the blow levelled at me, and gave him a counter-stroke on the side of the neck. He came up again, and raising his foot to kick me, I again anticipated him, and gave him a hard blow on his shin-bone which dropped him, and he, like myself, lay on his back.

Another man now entered the fray, and levelled furious blows at me which I parried, and again counter-stroked with effect, the man retreating

with many groans. There was now an ugly rush of many feet towards me, and I sat up and did what I could to stop the assault, when fortunately my friend reappeared with a couple of constabulary men, who dispersed the enemy and assisted me to rise and limp to the hotel.

The next night we were walking in the outskirts of Tralee, and were obliged to pass through a crowd who had evidently been holding a similar meeting. I advised my companion to desist from talking until we had passed through the crowd; but he persisted, and as a reward I heard a thudding sound, and my friend dropped like a stone. I saw a tall, black-bearded man make off, and tried to follow him, but my progress was barred by many hands, and I was advised to get home or there would be murder. I accordingly picked up my companion, who was bleeding from the head, and carried him to our hotel. Here the landlord sent for a doctor, who dressed the wound in a workmanlike manner, which suggested he had had much practice in that particular class of wound. Later on the sergeant of constabulary called to see us, and when all was quiet, the sergeant took me to a small house on the edge of the town, where we arrested the man. The following morning I appeared against him, and he was sentenced to a short term of imprisonment.

The very next day I saw from the window of our hotel a "faction" fight between two opposite parties. They were all armed with formidable sticks, blows fell thick and fast, and men dropped like ninepins. Then I saw a brave priest rush into the midst of them, showering blows at each side indiscriminately. The men fled as if by magic. I was concluding in my own mind what a splendid religion the Roman Catholic religion

was for an impetuous race like this to obey so readily its discipline, when, alas! a few minutes after the good priest had departed, the fight broke out with redoubled fury, and was not suppressed until cleared by a troop of cavalry, who, with drawn swords, came charging down the main street.

The Roman Catholic religion has undoubtedly much control over the passions of her children, but it is not quite perfect in that respect yet. I saw two pupils of Castleknock College fighting, blood was commencing to flow, and I thought it about time to interfere, when suddenly the angelus bell rang out. In an instant the two combatants and the crowds of excited schoolboys were all down on their knees. In a moment all was quiet and still; I raised my hat, and again thought what a splendid religion the Roman Catholic religion was for even the wild, excited passions of schoolboys, when alas! once more, as soon as the angelus bell had ceased, the two boys again leapt to their feet and at each other's throats, the crowd inciting first one and then the other to kill his man.

Fortunately for the Irish people, and perhaps for the rest of mankind, the Irish are not always fighting, and it is more pleasant to record their virtues than their faults. In their sunny temperament they make delightful companions. The educated are fresh and vigorous in thought and expression, the uneducated are—well, they hide their ignorance in a spirit of cheerfulness which is difficult to resist.

The Irish farmer who, though uneducated, called his neighbour's pig "Maud," because it was always wandering in the garden, had surely a poetic fancy which was merely undeveloped. They have such a smiling way of overcoming

difficulties too, and might appropriately be designated "pats of butter."

There were four of us travelling in the wilds of Connemara. We stopped at a cottage on the roadside, and it being my turn to cater and cook, I resolved to give my three companions an epicurean treat. I therefore rolled up my sleeves, and, much to the wonder of the woman of the house, proceeded to make dough, cut up chunks of meat, onions, and everything else I could lay my hands upon in the way of eatables. I put all these things in a huge basin, and covered the whole with the dough I had made. All I forgot to do was to tie the lot up in a cloth. In about two and a half hours I lifted the steaming lid, to see how the great pudding was progressing. The sight was disappointing, meat, pastry, the basin, and other edibles were all chasing each other in bewildering confusion. The woman looked in.

"Why does ye put in a basin?" she asked naïvely.

I considered for a moment, knowing I should have the sarcasm of my three companions to face, when they returned hungry from their stroll.

"When are ye going to put in the praties?" asked the woman.

This gave me an inspiration, so in I dumped the potatoes and more onions, with plenty of pepper and salt, and I waited for the result. When my friends came in, they sniffed, and "B," the caustic one, remarked that there was a savoury odour, and that he was hungry. "F" and "J" said nothing, but had a pleasant look of anticipation about them. When it was served up, to my delight it pleased every one. They could not understand the empty basin, except, as "B" remarked, that it might be to flavour the business.

"What do you call it?" asked "B."

"Connemara stew," said I.

"Well, it's good," he acknowledged: "but where is my knife and fork?"

The woman said she had only three knives and three forks, but that she had sent next door for another knife and fork. Three of us thereupon went on with our meal, thoroughly enjoying it, while "B" waited patiently for his knife and fork. After gazing moodily at his own fast cooling plate, he asked the woman, somewhat irritably, how far was next door. She replied that it was about two miles. "B" muttered an imprecation, but was obliged to wait until one of us had finished, and until the process of cleaning the knife and fork could be concluded before he could taste the dainty, appetising "Connemara stew."

The next day, after tramping about ten miles towards the coast, we stopped at a small farm and asked the woman if she could provide us with any dinner. As this was the age of boycotting she flatly refused to do so. While "B" and "F" were arguing the point with her, I noticed an ancient elm tree with a stout branch shooting horizontally overhead into the front garden, and I, wishing to stretch my muscles, caught hold of it, and performed one or two gymnastic feats, finishing by suspending myself by my toes.

"Who is that?" asked the woman.

"Oh, he's a great man," answered "B," impressively.

"Is he a banshee, or a holy man?" inquired she in some trepidation.

"Both," said "B" promptly; "he comes every now and then with us, and we have to do what he tells us. I think you had better get him some dinner, or it may be worse for you."

The woman looked hard at me, and as I walked solemnly towards them she curtseyed and crossed

herself. She then told "B" that she would get the best dinner she could for us. We went inside, and I further mystified the woman by bending the poker on my arm, afterwards straightening it; by throwing various articles apparently through the roof and "palming them" from "F" and "J's" ears. In a short time we had an excellent dinner of cabbage, bacon, and potatoes, with a strong cup of tea afterwards. As we paid the woman for her hospitality, she again curtseyed and crossed herself, as I passed through the door. After that we had no difficulty in procuring food.

Later on when we reached Kilkee, a beautiful watering-place in County Clare, we found it very full of visitors, and could not obtain accommodation all together. In this dilemma "B" and I applied to the head constable, who told us that as far as he knew all the available accommodation was taken up, but he advised us to go to a cabin, a little way out of the town, kept by a man named Dwyer, who sometimes put up an occasional visitor. We accordingly went there; we found the cabin surrounded by a cabbage and potato patch, at which the owner, a man of medium height, was gazing intently, as though he would read their very thoughts if they had any. On making our request known to him, he looked steadfastly and silently at us for a few moments, then said slowly—

"I'll show ye the spare bedroom."

We followed him, entering the one-room cabin, in the far corner of which was a bed. We wondered where the spare bedroom was, but he went through the back door, and returned with a ladder about ten feet high. With this he gave the ceiling a prod, removing the cover of a manhole close to the wall.

"Yez can go up," he said, motioning towards the ladder.

We went up, and found a couple of beds laying on the boards on opposite sides of the manhole. Light was obtained from a side window, and from various chinks in the roof. The beds were composed of broom and heather, with a sheet thrown over, and a sheet and quilt to cover, with a small pillow. It was undoubtedly primitive, but looked clean, and as it was a case of "Hobson's choice" we arranged to return there in the evening. After taking our meals in the town, and having a good bathe, and good time generally, "B" and I returned to our lodgings. The man, who apparently lived alone, nodded silently to us, and brought us the ladder. We ascended and retired to rest, or rather to partial rest, for the broom persisted in piercing with its little lances the sheet, but we ultimately obtained some sleep. In the morning we rose up, dressed, and asked the landlord how much we were indebted to him. He looked at us hard, then examined us critically from head to foot, coughed slightly to clear his throat, then observed in a solemn voice—

"I suppose a pound would not be too much for ye?"

"B" became electric. "A pound!" he said indignantly: "we don't want to buy your cabin. I never heard of such a——"

"Aren't yez gentlemen?" interrupted the landlord.

"Gentlemen!" echoed "B," still furious. "Not we, we are hard-working sons of toil, who live by the sweat of our brow, who have to travel from town to town because we have no money to pay our fares, who have to——"

"Och! I beg your pardon," interposed the

man; "I thought yez were gentlemen. We'll say fourpence."

We paid him a just sum, and departed.

We continued our wanderings along the west coast, crossing the Gregory Mountains, calling at Dingle, and lonely Caherciveen, Bantry, lovely Glengariff, far off Castletown, and over the mountains to Kenmare, a delightful journey, most of which we did on foot. After spending a little time at Killarney, we returned to Dublin.

On reaching my lodgings I found an invitation from Carl Rosa, inviting me to a supper with the members of his opera company at the Portobello Hotel, in order to do honour to Signor Celli. The latter, whose real name was Courtney, was an Irishman, and an old Trinity man. He had fallen into ill-health, and was about to take a long journey to the Antipodes. All the members of the company, including the ladies, were present, and there was much jollity and merriment at the gathering.

Carl Rosa had a splendid company at that time, but I could not help reflecting how few sopranos Ireland and Scotland have produced. I think Catherine Hayes, who flourished in the fifties, and who was born at Limerick, was the only soprano of any note from the Emerald Isle. I do not remember any from Scotland, except Madame Parepa, who was born at Edinburgh, but who was of English and Wallachian parentage. On the other hand, we have had plenty of baritones from these two countries. I suppose there must be climatic reasons for it, and the same law that excludes sopranos and nightingales are relatively well adapted for baritones and seagulls.

It was about two-thirty when we broke up, and as I walked home through the deserted streets to my lodgings, I remembered with some concern

that I had forgotten to inform my landlord that I should be late. On arriving home I found the house everywhere in darkness, and knocked rather quietly at the door; but as no one answered the summons, I looked up at my bedroom window on the first floor and then at an iron spout which came very close to my window. I therefore determined to clamber up. I got to the window all right, and having raised it, placed one leg inside the room, but as I was drawing the other one after me, I heard a shrill policeman's whistle. Hoping the man would understand the situation and go away, I hastily undressed and got into bed. I had no sooner done so than a loud knocking at the street door reverberated throughout the house, and as it continued I heard Mr. Macken coming down the stairs, uttering many excited exclamations. He, however, unbarred the door and faced the tall constable, when the following colloquy took place.

Mr. M.—"And what do ye mean by thundering at the house of a respectable citizen, and waking up the gintleman that slaaps in the front bedroom?"

Tall Policeman—"There's a burglar in your house, man, and I want to arrist him."

Mr. M.—"Want to arrist him, do you? And how did you see him enter—was it through the keyhole ye saw him?"

Tall Policeman—"I tell ye, I saw him with my own eyes, going through the front window up above, and ye had better let me in to search the premises."

Mr. M.—"And so ye saw him go through the front window, did ye? Ah, well, if he's gone in there, he'll never come out alive, for that's where Mr. Alexander, the greatest boxer and wrestler and swordsman that ever lived, slaaps. I've seen

what he can do when he's awake, but Holy Mother! there's no knowing what he will do when he's aslaap, so ye'd better get off to your barracks, and slaap off some of the Jameson ye've been taking."

Tall Policeman—"I tell ye, man, there's a burglar in your house, and I wishful to arrist him, and if ye stand in my way, I'll have to arrist you for obstruction in my duty."

Mr. M.—"Ah, well, if ye want to come in, come in, but it's report ye I will in the morning. Come along now, Mr. Commissioner of Police, and aisy up the stairs, they were not built for faat like yours. Now come along, that's the first landing, don't fall through the window; up these stairs now, and this is the front room."

Mr. Macken tapped gently; I did not answer at first, thinking I had done a very foolish thing in getting through the window as I did, and I answered very sleepily, "Come in." They entered, Mr. Macken holding up a candle.

"I beg your pardon, Mr. Alexander," said he, in his best English, "but this 'horney' of a policeman says that there is a burglar in your room, and wants to arrest him."

The policeman now apologised and commenced searching the room, looking under the bed, in the wardrobe, and up the chimney, Mr. Macken in the meantime firing off a running commentary of sarcasm.

"Ye haven't looked in the chest of drawers yet. There's an old tay caddie on the mantelpiece there, ye'd better search that, and look under that pincushion, maybe he's hiding there."

The policeman stared in bewilderment. "I'm sorry, sorr, for this inthrusion, but it's a burglar I saw come in, as sure as my name is Michael Dempsey."

"Ah, then, it's St. Michael ye ought to be," fired off my landlord, "for he is with the angels, and ye are full of spirits; but it's to the superintendent I'll report ye in the morning;" and with running interjections of this nature, he followed the heavy feet of the policeman as he left the house.

I felt qualms of conscience, but I put it right with the inspector on the following day, and Dempsey was not reprimanded.

## CHAPTER XIV

### A RELIGIOUS "CHUCKER-OUT"

OUTSIDE my lodgings there used to be a tall, hulking, lazy Irishman who was most ingenious in his solicitations to obtain a drink, or anything else that he wanted. Whatever the state of the weather he had a phrase implying that it required a drink to enable him to withstand its severity. When I came out in the mornings, if it were raining he would say, "A terrible soft morning, sorr," and with a convulsive shudder he would look at the clouds as though all the elements were going to converge on his poor suffering body; or if it were fine, he would observe, "A powerful dhry day, sorr," licking his lips as though he were in the Nubian Desert, and was dying of parched thirst. If a procession headed by a band passed by, he would remark, "Cheer up, all of ye, we'll soon be dead," and look the picture of poignant grief. Knowing of my total abstention he would mutter as I passed him, "It's a quare man I wouldn't take a pint with this morning." When a Labour Exchange was opened for the unemployed he thrust his head in the doorway, and looking cautiously round, whispered to the astonished committee, "Any danger of a job here?"

Humour of this kind was an everyday experience. The Irish themselves do not consider it humorous, but the Saxon or Scot who comes

over to look out for humour is highly pleased with it, and retails it with an attempt at the brogue on his return to his native land. After all, we cannot blame them. Life is so full of grey clouds that they are wise who try to exact a little sunshine out of everything; that, at any rate, is my object in relating these small incidents, for if a writer can give you cheerfulness and interest in his book, he will do much to palliate its faults.

"I would like to consult you about my son Ned," said my landlord to me in a mysterious whisper one morning.

I had a great friendship for Mr. Macken, and told him that I would be sincerely pleased if I could be of any service to him.

"Well, it's just this way," said he, dropping his voice, and looking round to see that the coast was clear: "my son Ned has ambitions; he thinks he can play the fiddle, which he won't do if he lives to be as old as Methuselah. Then he thinks he has a taste for oratory, and would in time make a Mimber of Parliament, but there's too many on that job already. Then he thinks——"

"Mr. Macken," said I, "what do you think—what, in your opinion, is Ned suitable for?"

"Well, I've been cogitating over the matter, and in my opinion the only hope left for him is to become a hairdresser."

"Good idea," I exclaimed; "but where will he practise?"

"Oh, that's all right, he's been practising on me for the last twelve months, and that little lock-up shop round the corner belongs to me, and I'm thinking I could set him up there if I could only get him some customers, and that's where I think you can help me, sorr."

"I'm sure I can, Mr. Macken, and if you'll only let me know the day, I'll promise to do my best for Ned."

And this I did, exacting promises from all my pupils that they would give Mr. Edward Macken, Hairdresser, Adelaide Road, Dublin, a trial. On the following week I had many callers and two or three deputations. One spokesman of a deputation wanted to know what the d—— I meant by sending them to that escaped imbecile who had the audacity to practise hairdressing in a city which was famous for its fashions in military crops and turned-up moustaches?

"I am sorry," I began, "if he did not suit you——"

"Suit us," cried they in chorus; "why, the man's mad!"

"Why! What!" I said, expostulating. "In what way has the hairdresser failed?"

"Failed!" they all groaned together.

"He cut one side of my hair," said one man, "and then took down his fiddle and wanted to know if I would like to hear 'God save Ireland.' I told him 'No,' that I was in a hurry to get to the office; but he insisted, and commenced scraping the tune. At last I had to dash off to catch the train, and here I am with one side of my head cut, and everybody laughing at me."

"I went in for a shave," said another: "he dabbed me all over with soapsuds, mouth and all, so that I couldn't speak, then flourished his razor aloft and asked me what religion I was."

"When I went in," said a third, "he plopped me down on a chair where there was a lot of wires on which he was platting a wig. I've felt sore ever since," said he, pathetically.

"When I went in," said another——

But I had heard enough, and Ned got no more recommendations from me.

It was the custom of our Protestant friends in the Irish capital to hold occasional conferences, which were attended by many celebrated clergymen from various parts of the Empire. These meetings were very crowded, and in order to exercise some control over the attendance, and the sometimes excited audiences, admittance was gained by ticket, and a large staff of stewards was organised to carry out the arrangements. One year I was invited to take charge of these stewards, and as many eminent speakers, including Dr. Mackay, author of "Grace and Truth," were to be present, a great rush for seats was expected, with probably some small disturbances, in and out of the meetings. I therefore drilled a dozen "bhoys" in all the arts of keeping doors, collecting tickets, showing to seats, and above all, in the best methods of ejecting disturbers of the peace. The first evening Professor Drummond was the chief speaker, with Colonel Saunderson in the chair. There was, as we anticipated, a large demand for seats, and for an hour before the time for opening, the doors were besieged by a large crowd.

However, the "bhoys" were equal to the occasion, and did their work exceedingly well, and when the hall was full the doors were closed against all comers. One aggressive Irishman had, notwithstanding, managed to gain admittance, and, sitting in the front of the gallery, was making himself very obnoxious by his constant interruptions. Several times the stewards called him to order, but all in vain. At last, losing all patience, I asked the stewards to point the man out to me.

"There he is," they whispered, "that man with the red whiskers."

"All right," I said, "I am going to remove him."

I accordingly, by a circuitous route, ascended to the rear of the gallery. As I did so, I could plainly hear the interruptions of the red-whiskered one. When I came on the scene, however, my man was as quiet as a lamb, he appeared, indeed, greatly affected by the utterances of the speaker. The question I had to decide, therefore, was, should I, in his present peaceful state of mind, give him another chance, or take advantage of his calm demeanour to remove him? Then I saw, peeping through a distant doorway, a bunch of the "bhoys'" heads. They were waiting to see my *modus operandi*.

This decided me; I would give them an object lesson. So quietly working my way towards my quarry—he was still calm and dove-like—I suddenly stooped and lifting him backwards on my right shoulder, bore him off in triumph. Then there was a row, my capture kicked, shouted, and, I regret to say, used bad language; but I held the erring one, and taking him downstairs to the entrance, placed him, with the smiling approval of the tall policeman, outside upon the pavement. Then I retraced my steps, to receive the eulogies of the "bhoys." They looked at me very hard, but said nothing. Then the strangest of all things happened. This was nothing less than a repetition of the interruption from the gallery.

"What is that?" I asked, mystified.

The "bhoys" grinned, and said—

"That is the red-whiskered man."

"But," I said, "I took him out."

"You took out the wrong man," they replied.

"But," I said, "I took out the man with the red whiskers."

They looked serious and shook their heads; then one said—

"There is more than one pair of red whiskers in Dublin."

"Well," I said reflectively, "I'm not going to try my hand at another."

Then the policeman came to the door.

"This man," he said, "wants your name an' address, to summon ye for assault."

I went out. The red-whiskered man wanted more, he wanted to fight me; but I apologised very humbly, and the affair ended by his asking me to "Come an' have a dhrink at Mooney's."

This affair rather lowered my prestige with the stewards. I therefore determined to be more careful in the future.

There was an extraordinary crowd of people the next evening to hear the celebrated Dr. Mackay, Sir Edward Synge Hutchinson being in the chair. There was great commotion and excitement at the door, as people constantly tried to get in without tickets, and were not easily repulsed. My stewards managed fairly well, until one big, burly man forced his way in, and, without answering the steward's query as to whether he had a ticket of admission, elbowed his way through them as if he were forcing a scrimmage. I saw the opportunity to retrieve my prestige, and leaping down a few steps, I closed with him. We had a sanguinary conflict; I found him a very tough opponent, but finally I "tripped" him down, Cumberland fashion. The "bhoys" chuckled, and proceeded to lay hold of him to eject him. The man still struggled, his face red with excitement. As I knelt upon his chest, he blurted out—

"Let me go, you blackguard. Don't you know I'm the speaker for to-night—Dr. Mackay."

This information was fully realised when I caught for the first time a glimpse of the clerical collar, which had been hidden by a woollen muffler. Dr. Mackay gave us a bit—in fact, a large piece—of his mind, and that night on the platform he spoke cynically of the proverbially Irish welcome, detailing his experiences at the door. For the remainder of that Conference, I and my stewards were in moral disgrace.

Dublin has always had plenty of eloquent clergymen of her own, but, like most of her gifted sons, they have not always been appreciated in their own city. If you asked a native as to the merits of her public men, you would probably receive a version of his shortcomings, or something that held him up to ridicule. Thus, a well-known barrister who was extremely stout, was dubbed "The Mystery of the Hansom Cab," the suggestion being that it was a mystery how he got in and out of the said vehicle. Another well-known minister was called "Bluebeard," because he had married four or five wives. It is related that when he buried his fifth wife, his brother-in-law, who came over from England to attend his sister's funeral, arrived too late.

"Do you know which way the funeral has gone?" he asked a stalwart policeman.

"No, sorr," said the latter; "but I think he buries them over there," and he pointed in the direction of the Protestant cemetery.

I have before spoken of the beauty of Dublin women, of their fresh complexions, and charming accent. One morning, when walking towards Trinity College, I saw such a divinity approaching in my direction. She had the face of a Madonna, if Madonnas have fresh complexions, and the

soul of purity and guilelessness shone from her soft brown eyes. "Her hair was thick, with many a curl." I turned round to admire her, as others did. It was a case of *veni, vidi, vici*, but whether in the masculine or feminine sense I know not. But I feel I must place on record here that the divinity alluded to has always proved the "Better-half" of Wayfarer during a long career.

Politics was now commencing to raise its ugly head in Dublin. Great antipathy was felt and shown to English people, and the British Government was heartily cursed every morning by little knots of idle Irishmen who gathered round the placards of the morning papers and read their headlines. Demonstrations and processions were of daily occurrence, and Sundays seemed specially reserved for disturbances and outrages. I saw the arrest of Mr. Parnell at the Imperial Hotel in Sackville Street. It was accomplished quite to the taste of the Dublin Nationalists, a huge crowd shouting vehemently for Parnell, and little bubbles of excitement here and there as some policeman or non-sympathiser was hustled. The air was electric, every moment I expected to see an open rebellion break out.

Suddenly there was a faint sound of bugles in the distance, then the tramping of horses' feet, becoming more definite as they approached nearer. Then a mighty shout arose, and troops of Hussars with flashing swords charged down Sackville Street. Everybody tried to vanish or get out of the way. I myself did the record run of my life. In a few moments the cavalry had taken possession of the street, with all its approaches. A troop of them halted at the Imperial Hotel, rushed in, and with the aid of some special police, brought out Parnell, pale and sardonic.

They placed him upon a side-car and drove off in a whirl of suppressed murmurings.

English people were subjected to boycotting. If their accent was heard they received anathemas and rough treatment. I was set upon several times, in different parts of the city, but gave back, I think, as much as I received.

It was when events were commencing to take this ugly turn, that my friend Mr. Du Cros showed me an advertisement in the London *Times*, inviting applications for the position of Director of the Liverpool Gymnasium. This was of special interest to me, and after long consultation with Mr. Du Cros, I decided to apply for the position. In due course I received a reply that I was one of the selected candidates. I believe there were seventy-five applications, including two or three medical men and several officers in the army and navy services.

I went over in a terrible storm, and found a committee of twenty-one solemn-looking gentlemen seated round a long table. I went through a novel examination at their hands. One of them, a doctor, sounded me with a stethoscope, another pounded me all over to see if I was right in wind and muscle, another spoke physiology and anatomy to me. One probed my intellect, another my social status, yet another on total abstention, while several questioned me on biblical knowledge. I was just feeling inclined to challenge them all to a bout with the boxing gloves, when the chairman formally shook hands with me and announced that I was elected.

I returned home in a storm, and back again to Liverpool on the following day in a third storm. When I accidentally met the chairman, he inquired if I was not Mr. Alexander? I answered that I was "all that was left of him."

I have come to the conclusion, after much experience of sea travelling, that the more muscular the worse sailor you are likely to be. I have sometimes amused my friends by placing thirty of them in a row, and picking out with unerring instinct all the bad sailors. This I did by pinching their muscles. The best cure I have found for sea-sickness is to keep on chewing raw celery during the voyage.

When it became known that I was leaving Dublin every one appeared very sorry, and I received many gifts and illuminated addresses from various societies. My landlord shook his head mournfully, but said nothing; and Ned, whenever I approached him, always commenced to play a doleful dirge on his fiddle. Many artists asked me to sit as a model for them, and Sir Edward Burne-Jones wrote, saying he would like me to sit for him as model for a classical subject.

On the morning I was leaving I received a visit from Lord Alwyne Compton, who stated that the Lord-Lieutenant, Earl Cowper, would be glad if I paid a visit to the castle before I left. After some conversation as to ways and means, I agreed with Lord Compton to attend the castle at noon that day, and if I could possibly manage it, bring some of my best pupils and give a short demonstration before the Vice-regal Court.

He agreed, and I, taking a side-car, called upon all my clever students, asking them to meet me at the castle at one o'clock, and to bring whatever they could in foils, swords, bayonets, etc., together with their uniforms, so that we might give a demonstration. I myself turned up at the allotted time, carrying up my sleeve my trusty rapier. I looked about for my pupils, but could see nothing of them. The next minute

I felt a couple of heavy hands on my shoulders, and found myself under arrest. They took no notice of my protestations, but bundled me through a door, then into a dark, small room, turning the key upon me. From this place I could hear the distant cries, melancholy and humorous, of my men. One wanted his mother-in-law to know where he was; another, someone to go to his wife and family and tell them of the precarious position of the prop of the household, etc., etc.

I now pounded away at my door, and was answered by the stern-looking jailer, who advised me to keep quiet, or it would be worse for me. I told him that there had been a mistake, and that he had better inform Lord Compton of the position. He apparently did this, for in a short time Lord Compton arrived, and with many apologies and much merriment, set us all at liberty. We had been mistaken for Fenian raiders.

In a short time we were dressed in our uniforms, and gave a demonstration before the Vice-regal Court in the ancient St. Patrick's Hall. After this was over, Earl Cowper made a very pretty speech, praising our ability, and regretting our temporary detention. He finished up by inviting us to dinner, at which he presided.

I sat next to him, and had some interesting conversation with him on various topics. He gave me the impression that he was not enamoured of his position in Ireland. I told him that I thought that Ireland would never be satisfied, even if she got Home Rule. They seemed to thrive on agitation and disturbance. That I considered she ought to be ruled justly and firmly; that the country should be turned into a kitchen and fruit garden, with a tunnel from the

north of Ireland to Scotland, in order to facilitate transit. He said that such an undertaking would never pay; and I replied that great undertakings, if proved to be of great national importance, should not be considered altogether from a financial point of view, but that the truest economy would be to contribute security and contentment to the people.

He smiled, shook hands, and wished me *bon voyage!*

## CHAPTER XV

### SOME FAMOUS PUPILS

I UNDERTOOK the duties of Director of the Liverpool Gymnasium with mixed feelings. Eighteen years ago I had been there as an apprentice, and I looked now upon the nooks and corners in the large building which were associated so much with me as a boy, with much curiosity. Since that time it had had a varied fortune, and it now wanted refitting and bringing up to modern requirements.

The building had been purchased by Mr. Samuel Smith, the great Liverpool philanthropist, for the use of the citizens of Liverpool, and he had placed the management under the charge of the Liverpool Y.M.C.A., at that time a very solemn and narrow-minded body. After some agitation I obtained my reforms, and I determined to have a public re-opening by a grand demonstration.

It has been rightly said that physical training re-acts upon the mind, and enables the athlete to be calm and collected in the hour of danger. I was soon to have proof of this in my own experience. In the early eighties the weather was notoriously bad. To commence with, there was a record frost, and I was not surprised when one morning I heard a terrific report, my room door was flung violently open, and I was covered with dust and debris. It was very annoying, for I

was endeavouring to get some letters off by the next post. Wareing, my major-domo, rushed in, and with scared face told me the boiler had been blown through the roof, and was lying in the middle of the street outside.

"Any one hurt?" I inquired.

"No, sir."

"Then get me a duster, and send for the builder to come immediately and put things right."

"All right, sir," and he withdrew, bringing me a duster, which, after use, enabled me to get off my correspondence in time.

Exactly a week after that occurrence, I was again sitting in my room, endeavouring, as before, to get rid of my correspondence before the next post, when the door was again thrown violently open, and I was once more covered with dirt and debris. Again Wareing rushed in, and reported that the violent storm which was raging had blown the western tower down, which had come through the roof and two floors into the basement outside my door.

"Any one hurt?" I inquired.

"No, sir."

"Then bring me a duster, and tell the builder to come at once to put things right."

"Yes, sir," and he brought the duster. "You'll have to be careful coming out, sir, tons and tons have come down and there is no basement left."

"All right, Wareing," and I finished my correspondence.

On the following day there was a strong smell of gas, this time at my house in Hatherley Street. I sent for the plumber, who said the escape was in the basement. He lit a candle, to which I took exception.

"Oh, it's nothing," he replied, "it's very slight."

I followed him downstairs; when we got to the front cellar, there was a dry feeling, a bright flash, and I felt there was trouble in the air, so I turned sharply round. Next moment there was a loud report, I was flung violently down, and all the hair was taken off the back of my head. The plumber was badly hurt, and I took him to the hospital.

There was still one more trouble in store for me. I was in the large hall, playing tennis against Mrs. Alexander and Miss Nellie Brown, daughter of the Rev. Hugh Stowell Brown, when I heard a shriek from above. I looked up, and saw a thin, red-haired gawky girl descending through space from the rigging above, in the attitude of a valentine nymph. She was twenty-four feet above when I caught sight of her. My brain had a lightning committee meeting. Should I let her drop and take her to the hospital, or should I try and save her, and go there myself? Not knowing so much about the fair sex then as I do now, I adopted the latter course, and throwing myself into an Ajax-like attitude, I received the knock-down blow of my life. When I meet this lady now, I am glad she dropped on me when she was a child. I went to bed for a week.

After these small incidents were over, and the renovations were completed, we opened the gymnasium for classes, and had a great influx of pupils, which in a short time reached about one thousand men and two hundred women. Many of the pupils of my youth, now grown up, supported me. These included the families of the merchant princes, and great shipowners of the city, the Bibbys, Balfours, Forwards, Ismays, Rathbones, Brocklebanks, McIvors, and Walkers.

Old Sir Andrew Walker always accompanied his family.

Some of my more expert pupils included R. E. Thomas, champion jumper; F. W. Schofield, N.C. quarter-mile champion; A. J. Ryalls, international rugby forward; F. W. Huntingdon, champion swimmer; G. P. Mills, the famous cyclist, who first made the record run from Land's End to John o' Groats; and A. G. Steel, the famous English cricketer.

Speaking of Mills reminds me that about this time I introduced the bent handles for cycles. Up to that time the handle-bars had been as straight as pokers, and I found that in long-distance riding, the exertion told upon the inferior (*pronator*) muscles of the arm, causing acute pains. I therefore suggested to Mr. William Shakespeare, proprietor of the Royal Mail Cycle Works, Birmingham, that it would be a great advantage to use bent handles. He came to see me, and I further explained to him the necessity for the change. He replied that he did not think the public would see it in the same light. They wanted to look well, etc. But out of deference to my opinion he had a bicycle and tricycle made with bent handles and these he exhibited at his showrooms in Bold Street, Liverpool. He was right. The public would have none of it, and the short time that he had placed the invention under protection soon ran out. But as some recompense for my suggestion, he presented me with the bicycle and tricycle fitted with these bent handles, and I used them with great comfort to myself.

About a year afterwards, R. Chambers, professional cyclist, wrote to me for some training tips. I told him that the best tip I could give him was to use bent handles. He adopted this course,

and was the object of much derision, but he won the championship, and as he continued to win everything, other professionals thought there might be something in the bent-handle idea, and they adopted them with much advantage to themselves. After this the public began to follow suit, until the practice became universal. Mr. Shakespeare wrote to me regretting that he had not protected the patent for a longer period. I also regretted it, but am glad that I gave a lead to the public in the matter.

We gave our demonstration to a packed audience, and although the Y.M.C.A. committee would not allow me to introduce wrestling, boxing, fencing, sword feats, or any other of the devil's tools, our efforts were much appreciated. I think I performed the "Flying Trapeze" on this occasion, and also mounted a miniature globe, two feet six inches in diameter, which I propelled by my feet up zig-zag planks fifteen inches wide, until I reached the top of the building. When I descended in safety there was a great sigh of relief, and the chairman, Mr. Samuel Smith, told me I must never do it again. I never did so publicly at the gymnasium, but have done it elsewhere. There was to me a great fascination in standing on a globe and propelling it in any direction you choose. I have also propelled a sixteen-pound round shot in a similar manner.

The gymnasium was now at its high-water mark of success. It became a fashionable resort of the city. I appeared to be popular with my pupils, and increased this popularity with an incident which happened on one of the public nights. I was conducting a class of about two hundred men. The visitors' galleries were packed with onlookers. One man who had taken too much drink and was irritated because he could

not obtain a seat, created a disturbance, and shocked every one with his language. I therefore called my class to the position of "attention" and proceeded to the gallery to investigate. He was a broad-shouldered man, gesticulating wildly, and offering to fight every one in the building. I had not forgotten my experiences with the red-whiskered man in Dublin, but there was no mistake about the offender this time. Approaching warily, I adroitly attacked him from the rear, and stooping, carried him off on my right shoulder. As I marched along with my burden, who was kicking furiously, both pupils and visitors greatly relished the situation, and when, after chucking him out in the street, I returned, I obtained quite an ovation.

I sometimes had strange visitors. One day I heard a knock at my room door, and on my saying "Come in," a great big, very stout man appeared, and in a strong American accent asked if I was the "boss." I replied in the affirmative.

"Wall," said he, "what's about your charge for taking this right away?" and he slapped his abnormal waist with his right hand.

I looked at the offending portion, and replied, "Three guineas." Whereupon he took out his purse, and laid the money on the table.

"Now," said he in a preparatory tone, as though he expected me to use a carving knife.

"Sit down," I said. He sat down heavily. "I'll have to diet you," said I.

"What!" said he, alarmed.

"And give you various forms of exercise. You must come here every morning, and I will change your exercise, and perhaps your diet too."

"Why," said he, "I'm captain of the *Pennsylvania*, which runs to Philadelphia and back."

That, however, made no difference, and I gave

him a diet and physical prescription which he kept up on board ship. He came to me every time he returned to port, and in a short time he was as other men are.

On another occasion, a well-known Greek wrestler, who styled himself "Pietro the Terrible Greek," burst into my room, and announced himself "ready to wrestle anybody in the world for all the money it contained."

"Have you anybody," he demanded in grating, broken English, "that dare wrestle with me, Pietro the Terrible Greek?"

At this moment another knock came to the door, and on my calling "Come in," Steadman and Lowden, the English Champion Wrestlers, appeared in the doorway.

"Yes," I said, "we can accommodate you. Here are two of our 'lightweights' who will be 'happy to give you a fall.'"

The Terrible Greek looked aghast at the two Cumberland Brobdingnagians, then, hastily seizing his tasseled cap, he rushed off, even more hastily than he had entered.

A different kind of caller was Lord Lathom, whose dignified and courtly manner I have never seen equalled with the exception of King Edward VII.'s. He came, and sitting down opposite to me, told me that he was very anxious about the health of his son, Lord Skelmersdale.

"He is a delicate boy," he added, "and I am desirous of doing all in my power to make him strong and healthy. I have heard so much of physical training lately that I wonder if it would be of any service in his case?"

I made some inquiries about his methods of living and environment, and then made some suggestions.

"I wish you would come out to Lathom

House," he remarked, "and take up his case personally, as he is not able to attend here."

I told him that it would be a great pleasure to undertake the task, but that I feared my work and obligations would prevent me doing so, but I sketched out a prescription and code of rules, and promised to have a small gymnasium fitted up at Lathom House, and to send out an assistant occasionally. After thanking me warmly, and looking over the gymnasium, he shook hands and said good-bye. I do not remember a father being so anxious about the welfare of his boy as the good Earl of Lathom seemed. I carried out all my promises, and am glad to think that they were in a measure useful.

Another caller was James Mace, my old boxing master and ex-champion pugilist of England. I was a little shocked at his appearance. When last I saw him, he was the embodiment of health and vigour; now he looked like an aged mastiff with the skin hanging loosely upon his once formidable muscles. He told me that he was boxing in halls and circuses, but that it was getting hard work.

"I hope you have been able to save some money?" I volunteered.

"I have handled plenty of money, but have lost it in speculations, and in things I did not understand."

"If ever you get really hard up, you must let me know, and I will organise something."

"It is not quite so bad as that, I have plenty of engagements; it is old age that is bothering me."

"That will bother all of us sooner or later, from the Prime Minister downwards, so that you will be in good company. How is your son Alfred?"

"He is training for the ministry," he observed with a smile.

"Well," said I, "that ought to be a comfort to you. I hope he will make as much stir in the pulpit as you have done in the 'Ring.'"

We parted, and I never saw him again.

Mr. Samuel Smith, Dr. Manifold, A. G. Steel, and myself, formed a deputation and waited upon the Liverpool School Board, urging them to set a "lead" in compulsory physical training for the school children. We each made a short speech, advocating the matter from different points of view; but the committee would have none of it, and told us that we were proposing an unnecessary recreation for children who would be better employed in learning their lessons. We retired disappointed, but not crestfallen.

The chairman, S. G. Rathbone, M.P., called upon me on the following day, and said that he regretted the decision of the committee.

"Would you care to give evidence on this matter before the Education Commission, which will be held in London next week? I am a member of the Commission."

"If I can forward the interests of the school children in any way, I shall be very gratified."

"Well, come up to London—I will let you know the day—and take breakfast with me, then we can talk over matters."

I agreed to this, and in the course of a few days, heard from Mr. Rathbone, stating that he had arranged for my examination, and mentioning the date.

When it became known that I was to be examined as a physical training witness, all the health and sanitary associations in the country wished to be represented also; but so little importance did the Commission of that day attach

to health subjects, that they would only have one health witness. I therefore became the recipient of many appeals from various associations, asking me to represent their views also. I promised, but no barrister ever had so many "briefs."

I breakfasted with Mr. Rathbone at the National Liberal Club, and we arranged my evidence. The expenses clerk, who sat in the ante-room, was a keen footballer, and when he knew the purport of my visit, was sympathetic.

"Now what about your expenses?" he asked with unction.

"I am going to pay my own, from a patriotic point of view."

"Patriotic—we don't know that word here. Now look here, first of all there was a hansom from your house to the station, three and six; then there was the fare, first-class, of course, one pound fifteen. Then there was another cab here, three and six; then there was your hotel, ten and six. Then there was your cab here, three and six. Then you paid a substitute at Liverpool, a guinea. There's your dinner, six shillings. Now you have to get back again, multiply by two; total, seven pounds eight shillings and sixpence."

He handed me the money, and I was called in. Earl Beauchamp, who presided, asked me some preliminary questions, as did various members of the Commission. The two men, however, who showed most interest in my evidence, were Dr. Dale, of Birmingham, middle-aged, medium height, with a quick alert mind—he ought to have been a barrister; and Cardinal Manning, old, ascetic looking, with a face like parchment, and wearing a black skull-cap which gave him a strange appearance. Dr. Dale asked me, amongst other questions, if I was acquainted with what the Birmingham School Board were doing for the

physical welfare of their children? And when I told him that they were doing more than any other board in England, he glanced round at his fellow Commissioners with a look of triumph. Cardinal Manning, who spoke very distinctly for a man of his years, asked me what effect, if any, physical training had upon the morals of the young. I told him in what way I considered they did so from a physiological point of view. When some of the Commissioners demurred, I produced a letter from Dr. Rich, medical officer of the Liverpool Post Office, corroborating my views. I did my best at this Commission to get in the thin end of the wedge of physical training, which is now compulsory in our national schools. When I came out, my Mark Tapley friend smiled cheerfully, and wanted to know if I could not remember any other expenses!

On my return to Liverpool I received a letter from Mr. Montgomery, of the Dominion Line, informing me that the Canadian La Crosse Team and a team of Iroquois Indians were on their way to England to introduce the game of la crosse into this country, and were expected to land at Liverpool in a few days. He asked for my assistance in giving them a welcome. I accordingly invited both teams to dinner, and afterwards gave them a special display performance at the Liverpool Gymnasium.

I felt very happy, sitting between the captain of the Canadian team and White Eagle, captain of the Iroquois team. The former, whose name, I think, was Ross, was a splendid type of manhood, while White Eagle was a typical Red Indian, a little above the middle height, red skinned, with sleek black hair, and a very dignified bearing. He told me in broken sentences that he had been Lord Wolseley's scout during his Red River

campaign, and considered him a great warrior. I told him that my nickname as a boy had been "Antelope," on account of some supposed special activity on my part. He said it was a good name, and that activity was a good character to bear.

After dinner some speeches were made. White Eagle seconded a vote of thanks, and continually spoke of me as the great warrior Antelope, which caused considerable amusement to those present. They seemed astonished at our display afterwards, the Indians becoming very excited, applauding vociferously with their deep, guttural voices.

As for myself, I was thrice blessed by White Eagle calling me "his brother of the big heart," "Antelope, chief of the bounding deer," and "the Great Father of the Young Men."

They were all pleased at their reception at Liverpool, and I think this impression remained with them until they returned home.

## CHAPTER XVI

### A REMARKABLE LECTURE

It is curious what strange people one occasionally meets in trains. In going to London I was pestered by a clergyman on the new notion of psychology and other kindred subjects. He declared he could tell me my profession. He tried, but did not succeed. I then told him his profession; and when he asked me how I managed to guess, I told him that it was by looking at his clerical collar. Returning from London I got into a carriage which was full of ladies. A man got in and commenced to smoke a clay pipe, much to the discomfort of the women folk. As it was a non-smoking carriage, I asked him to desist; but as he would not, and used bad language towards me, I leaned forward, and taking the pipe from his mouth, threw it out of the window. He instantly rushed at me, but I gave him one on the left jaw which sent him back into his corner. There was a small storm in a teacup, but the man contented himself with uttering threats in the corner. I apologised to the ladies, and the man said he would give me in charge when the train arrived at Crewe. When the train did arrive there, the guard adjudicated, and the man was ordered into a smoking carriage. In his place there now came a great, big, burly man, evidently of the seafaring class. We entered into conversation. He was a much-travelled man, and I told

him I had done little travelling except in the British Isles.

We spoke on several subjects, until we drifted to swimming, and on this topic he showed such technical knowledge that I inquired his name. He turned out to be Captain Webb, who had lately swum the Channel. I explained my shortcomings in swimming, and he confirmed my belief that my muscles were too hard for them to become buoyant. He was a very pleasant companion, a typical British sea captain, and I am glad that I had the pleasure of meeting him.

One of the most popular preachers in Liverpool at this time was the Rev. Hugh Stowell Brown, whose chapel, where he drew large congregations, was a few doors from the gymnasium. As his daughter Nellie was one of our pupils, we occasionally went in the family pew. The pews adjoining were occupied by old Mr. Santley, father of the famous singer; by young Jones, now Colonel Sir Robert Jones, Inspector-General of Orthopedics; Captain Butcher, of *Alabama* fame, and I think I have seen Hall Caine there too. A famous organist, W. H. Jude, was the choir master, and the services in consequence were really very attractive. After the evening sermon Mr. Brown usually invited many friends to supper at his house in Falkner Square. Here he would ensconce himself comfortably in his armchair, and taking his long churchwarden pipe, with a glass of whisky and water at his elbow, entertain the company with reminiscences of old Liverpool. One Sunday evening we were waiting for the arrival of Alexander Pitt, one of his deacons, before we commenced supper. At last he arrived.

"You are late to-night, Pitt," remarked Mr. Brown.

"Yes, and it's a marvel that I'm here at all," returned Mr. Pitt.

"How is that?" asked Mr. Brown.

"Well, you know that I am taking duty for J—— at Earlstown. The arrangement was that when I saw my train coming, which was the last back to Liverpool, my place was to be taken by F——, one of the deacons, giving me just time to catch my train. Well, to-night, when I saw that train coming, I couldn't see F—— anywhere, so I simply told the congregation to kneel down in 'silent prayer,' and when I got them down, I rushed off, and just caught my train."

"And what became of the congregation?" asked Mr. Brown, blowing a cloud of smoke from his mouth.

"Oh, I don't know," replied Mr. Pitt, "but as far as I know, they are in 'silent prayer' yet."

I had just finished my work one evening, and was getting into mufti, when there was a knock at my door. Thinking it was my man, Wareing, I told him to come in. A dark, medium-sized man with a very kindly face entered. Without saying anything, he commenced to stare at my bodily development. I had just taken off my uniform. At length, as he did not say anything, I inquired his business.

"Well," he said at length, "at present I am admiring your muscles, but when you are dressed I want to talk business with you for a few minutes."

"If you don't mind," I replied, "you can talk business while I am dressing, it will save time."

"I have just arrived this evening from America, and it was there that I heard of you. Now, I am very desirous to do some good in the world, something for my fellow-men, something practical, something to put them in the way of helping themselves, and I want to put my efforts

in a very practical shape, so that they may be of some lasting benefit. Now I have been advised to consult you on this matter. I am told that you know all about young men and their proclivities. What do you think of the idea ? Are you willing to help me ? "

" There is plenty of room for effort of that kind," I replied, " and I shall be very glad if I can be of any service in forwarding so laudable an object. But the question is a wide and far-reaching one, and success depends upon the means at your disposal, and your enthusiasm in the matter."

" I think I have plenty of enthusiasm," he said, smiling, " and the means at my disposal are, I think, sufficient for my plan."

" If you will state your plans briefly, I shall be able to tell whether I can be of any assistance to you. Would you mind giving me your name ? "

" Quinton Hogg. Well, I am thinking of commencing my work in London. I thought of purchasing the old Polytechnic Institute in Regent Street, and fitting it up as a club for young men, where useful classes might be formed under religious auspices. But I want these classes to be popular, in order to induce the fellows to come from far and wide."

" We can easily provide the necessary attraction, and the scheme is capable of much good, but have you considered the difficulties and objections ? First the locality—Regent Street is not quite the neighbourhood where the class you intend to benefit reside. For this reason the Y.M.C.A. at Exeter Hall has not been a great success. Then the property and ground rent in Regent Street would be almost prohibitive against the scheme paying its expenses."

" I have set my mind upon purchasing the

Polytechnic ; that is, if I feel sure that I shall get the young fellows there, and with your help, I hope to make the place sufficiently attractive to get them. If Exeter Hall were more attractive they would have more members, but they don't cater for young men as I think they ought to do."

"They are bound by certain restrictions, traditional and departmental, which I fear will be a permanent obstacle to its ever becoming a popular rendezvous for young people."

"Well, those conditions need not hamper my scheme. I am my own committee ; all that I require is practical help from experienced men like yourself."

"You may rely on whatever help I am able to give. Your best course is to endeavour to understand the aspirations of young men, and to appreciate their difficulty in obtaining the fulfilment of their desires. When this is perfectly comprehended, you may then attempt to cater for them. Some desire intellectual progress, others technical knowledge, many are fond of social enjoyment, and their manly instincts ought to be provided for by the inclusion of a gymnasium, football, cricket, swimming, and other athletic exercises."

"That is exactly my view of the case, and I want you to understand that I desire one of the chief attractions of the place to be a Bible Class for young men. Do you think that would fit in with the others ?"

"I see no reason why it should not, but much will depend upon the personality of the conductor. He should be not only a Biblical scholar, but possessed of a sunny nature, with patience and tact."

"Well, I am going to take it on myself, and I hope I may succeed. But what can one man

do ? I shall require a great deal of help. How I should appreciate the services of a man like you ! Could you not come up to London and help me in this work ? "

" I have plenty of work here, and plans of my own which I hope to carry out, but whenever you require me I shall run up to London to see you."

" When could you come ? I want very badly to arrange the preliminaries with the architect about the disposal of the rooms, especially about the construction of the gymnasium. When could you come ? Could you come soon ? "

" I have finished my work for to-night. We can catch the twelve-o'clock train, and I can give you two or three hours in the morning, but I must return by the 10.10 a.m."

" That would do splendidly. How very kind of you after all your hard work here ! "

This was my first conversation with Quinton Hogg. Many, many times did I travel up to London by that midnight train, and after spending a couple of hours with him and the architect, return again by the 10.10 a.m. On more than one occasion I strongly advised him to endeavour to secure the permanent endowment of his project. This he was ultimately, with the assistance of the Charity Commissioners, able to do, and the Regent Street Polytechnic must always remain a monument to the lovable nature and Christian character of Quinton Hogg.

My interview with Quinton Hogg fired me with enthusiasm to do something myself for the working classes in physical recreation. I therefore visited two or three shopkeepers in one of the slum districts of Liverpool, and told them that if they could provide me with a room for once or twice weekly, I would organise free classes for physical

recreation, and rid them of the mischievous corner boys who hovered around their premises. They secured a large cellar underneath a cotton warehouse, and on the night appointed I sent down two of my pupils to commence the first class, which had been advertised by means of handbills.

On the following night they came to report to me. One had his arm in a sling, and the other had lost his watch. I went down upon the following evening. There was a big crowd of "roughs" outside the door, waiting for the teachers to turn up. Pushing my way through them, I mounted a step, and told them of the treatment my teachers had received from them, and that in future the affair must be managed by a committee. I thereupon selected six of the biggest ruffians I could find, and told them to allow only a limited number in, and that they must be held responsible for their conduct and good behaviour.

This they promised to do. Four mounted guard over the door, while two went down with me into the cellar to put things in order. When the room was full, we locked the door, and commenced proceedings. I gave them musical drill, making them whistle and sing the accompaniment themselves, jumping, etc., finishing up with boxing, in which I gave each of the committee men a good pommelling, thereby extracting much respect and ultimately the watch my pupil had lost. The success of this primitive club was so marked that in a short time we had similar clubs all over Liverpool. From Liverpool it spread to other towns, and I was inundated with letters asking for information on the subject.

Perhaps it was well that I should be kept busy at this time, for like most other people I had my

share of family troubles, my mother, two sisters, and two brothers having died within a couple of years. My youngest brother, "Willie," who died at twenty-two years, was a youth of extraordinary ability, mentally and physically. He could throw double somersaults and write very fair poetry on the same day, and his name is still a tradition amongst professional teachers. I have still one brother left, my brother Edward, who was one of the masters of the Liverpool College for a quarter of a century, and is well known now for the valuable curative work he is doing at Waterloo.

The Aldershot gymnastic staff now requisitioned my services, and it was arranged that I should go up annually during the month of May to give special training to the army instructors. This I did, and enjoyed it very much, and I fancy they appreciated my visits. Mr. S. G. Noakes, the chief fencing instructor to the army, wrote: "Our men like your visits immensely, and especially the practical way in which you impart your knowledge to them."

The Liverpool Corporation now invited me to give a series of Health Lectures, which were to take place at the Picton Lecture Hall. On the night of my first lecture, I noticed a very large crowd in the neighbourhood, and thinking there might be some open-air political meeting on, I inquired the cause from one of the crowd.

"It's that chap Alexander, that's going to give a lecture. When he talks he does all sorts of queer things with swords, and he's as strong as Samson."

This was very flattering to me, but as I could not get anywhere near the door, I was obliged to go round the crowd to the next building, the Free Public Library, and explain the position to Mr.

Cowell, the curator. He took me round to the back and then through a subterranean passage into the lecture hall. The place was packed and the doors were closed. I cannot account for the success of my lectures at this period. It cannot have been my oratory, nor do I think the public have any special liking for physiology. Perhaps it was the experiments with the sword and some feats of strength with which I illustrated the lecture that pleased the audience. Of course I introduced some "stories," Irish and Scotch, and my answers to the hecklers who yearned for information always seemed to be appreciated.

"In what way," asked one, "do Englishmen differ from men from the other parts of the United Kingdom?"

"Larger chests and larger appetites," would be my reply.

Another heckler with a pronounced Welsh accent, "What, now, about the Welsh?"

"Large waists and silent tongues."

When a Scotchman solemnly appealed to me and asked me in what way the physical characteristics of his countrymen were different from others, my reply "Larger heads and larger feet," did not altogether appear to satisfy him. And lastly, when an Irishman, of whom there were a great number in the audience, shouted, "What about ould Oireland?" my answer that their chief characteristic was their "extreme modesty" caused considerable hilarity.

One of the most successful lectures I have given was only a part of a lecture, but the whole was so successful that I would suggest that secretaries and organisers of public lectures should take up the idea. The subject was "Man: intellectual, physical and spiritual." The lecturer on the intellect was the Rev. Denton Thompson,

now Bishop of Sodor and Man; I spoke on the physical, and Bishop Ryle, of Liverpool, spoke on the spiritual side. The Mayor presided, and announced that each lecturer would speak for twenty minutes. Bishop Ryle suggested to me that I should talk last, to which I agreed. We were all extempore speakers, and the great audience was delighted with the eloquence of the first two speakers. I had felt that I must make a special effort in such company, and when the bishop sat down I threw off my ulster, and appeared in my costume, exhibiting plenty of medals on my breast, and much bustle on my physique.

I was fortunate in quickly getting on good terms with the audience, and my feats and stories and information seemed to be much appreciated. I invited the then and the future bishop to show their "faith" in me by kneeling down and allowing me to cut an apple, placed upon the back of their necks, in halves with two consecutive strokes of the sword, without, of course, injuring them. They shook their heads and declined. I asked them and the audience what was the use of intellect or faith unless there was a body to hold them, and if a body, why not a good body?

The audience were very enthusiastic over this lecture, and cheered us again and again. Bishop Ryle smilingly remarked to me that it was not a victory of "mind over matter," but "matter over mind."

On the following night, when I was taking my usual class, a rather massive-looking clergyman approached. It was the Rev. Dr. Mackay. Looking steadfastly at me, he said—

"Where have I met you before?"

"At Dublin," I said, in a humbled and contrite tone.

"Why," said he, "you are the man that was going to throw me out." He shook hands, and we made merry over the incident, spending a very pleasant evening together.

## CHAPTER XVII

### MEMORIES OF HAWARDEN

THE Press notices of my lecture resulted in my receiving a visit from the Rev. Harry Drew, the well-known Hawarden curate. He was dark, a little above the medium height, and wore a serious expression upon his good-looking features, as though he had much responsibility upon his young head.

"We have a great number of young men at Hawarden," he commenced, "that we are anxious to organise in some kind of club or society that will contribute to their welfare."

"What kind of occupations do they follow?" I asked.

"Mostly agricultural, and a great number at the Sandycroft Foundry, in the next village to Hawarden."

After some further conversation, I promised to run up to Hawarden and help him in his plans. Shortly afterwards I received a note from him stating that Mr. Herbert Gladstone (Lord Gladstone) would like to see me when I visited Hawarden. I accordingly, on an appointed day, called upon him. As I drove into the courtyard, passing Mrs. Gladstone's Orphanage on my left, with the noble pile of buildings in front, I could not help feeling that here was an instance of real feudal power exercising its sympathetic protection

over the poor and helpless children consigned to its care.

I found Mr. Gladstone in his den, a not very large room, a bright fireplace, a mantelpiece with many pipes upon it, many photographs above it, a writing-table, a couple of easy-chairs, and the walls covered with bookshelves, principally books of reference and of a political character. Mr. H. Gladstone in those days was a man of a little above the medium height, well built, dark complexion, with the Gladstone brown eyes, and a sunny expression upon his features; quite the typical young squire who lived in a happy environment, minus any anxieties.

He had, as is well known amongst his friends, a charming manner, a sense of humour, which rendered him a very agreeable companion. Indeed, on one occasion, I remember introducing him to a dear old lady who was a rank Tory. After being in the charmed circle for a few minutes, she whispered to me—

"I am not a Gladstonian, but I think I am a Herbert Gladstonian."

In the many years I have known him, he has always preserved these characteristics. Only once, I think, have I seen him otherwise. He was Home Secretary at the time, and when I called upon him at the Home Office, he was looking very serious indeed. He told me that he had just dismissed a deputation asking him to remit the death sentence passed upon Mrs. M——, who had been found guilty of poisoning her husband. The sentence was remitted, and some of us who served upon a committee with Mr. Gladstone declared that if we were going to commit a murder the present would be the best time, while Mr. Gladstone was Home Secretary.

My conversation with Mr. Gladstone embraced

many subjects. He asked me many questions about the leading men and their politics in Liverpool. I gave him the information, and specially with regard to Mr. Samuel Smith, whom I described as a rabid Gladstonian, and I undertook some friendly negotiations which I fancy resulted in Mr. Smith being elected member for Flintshire.

Mr. H. Gladstone told me of a projected visit to Ireland, and hearing that I was familiar with the geography of that country, asked me for some particulars. He produced a map, and I gave him what information I could, especially about the more distant outlying districts in the west and south-west. I advised him when travelling in the south and west to do so in the company of a priest, and when doing the north to have the society of a red-bearded Ulster man.

After this I paid many visits to Hawarden, and became acquainted with the various members of the family. I think I admired Mrs. Gladstone most. She was, notwithstanding her position, essentially the woman, the wife, and the mother, and had a very sincere and kindly sympathy for every one who happened to be in trouble physically or mentally. If any one happened to have a cough she would instantly prescribe a remedy, a "simple" of long ago, or if she thought any one was not sufficiently clothed, she would emphasise the necessity for wraps.

Mr. Herbert Gladstone asked me to go out shooting with him one morning, and handed me a gun. I told him I had never shot at anything in my life, except a target. "It is time you did," he said; so, accompanied by a keeper, we went into the Hawarden woods. But when I heard the cries of pain from wounded rabbits, I refused to shoot. This caused him much merriment.

"We must keep the numbers down," he said,

"or they will multiply and eat all the produce of the fields."

"If you could guarantee to kill them every time you shot at them," I returned, "your argument might be justified; but I expect many of them have a lingering death in their warrens."

We came upon Mr. Lewis Harcourt and the Rev. Harry Drew, who both had guns. Mr. Gladstone told them of my strange principles, and they all made merry at my expense. After the shooting was over, we climbed to the top of the old castle, and shot at a distant target. In this I scored second place, Mr. Gladstone being a remarkably good shot.

There was a large party present at luncheon. Mr. and Mrs. W. E. Gladstone occupied the head of the table, with many political friends around them. Miss Helen Gladstone and Mr. Herbert Gladstone occupied the other end, with the visitors at either side. I sat next to Miss Helen Gladstone, who told me that my right-hand neighbour was an Oxford don, and that I was to be very agreeable to him. I tried my best, but must acknowledge a failure, for I received nothing but monosyllables, such as "really," "indeed," and so on. I was just commencing to pity my companion for not having a more intelligent neighbour than myself, when I suddenly heard Mr. Gladstone's voice addressing me. It was always the habit when he spoke for every one else either to keep silent, or to speak in low whispers, which made the ordeal worse for me.

"Mr. Alexander," he said, "I want to ask your opinion about 'development.' Don't you think that everything capable of being so, should be developed to its fullest extent?"

I paused before I answered. All eyes were turned upon me.

"I think, sir," said I, "that I would substitute the word 'safe' for 'fullest'—not developing to the fullest, but to a safe extent."

"Give us your reasons," said Mr. Gladstone.

"In physical training it would not be wise to develop to the fullest extent, for the body would then be on the verge of strain or nervous breakdown, with more or less serious results in the background."

"Can you draw any analogy in any other sphere of life where the same conditions would be justified?" he demanded.

I thought for a moment, then answered, "There is a well-known vine grower, whose grapes have for many years secured the first place in the principal English exhibitions. To attain this result he has taken abnormal measures in light, colouring, food and heat, in order to develop them to their fullest extent. But this year they have utterly failed him, for their vitality has disappeared."

"That is an argument," admitted Mr. Gladstone; "I should like another analogy."

"There is the question of finance, sir," I submitted. "I take it, it would be unwise to develop such transactions to their fullest extent without, like the athlete, having a reserve to draw upon."

Mr. Gladstone smiled at me good-naturedly, but shook his head in a negative way. The conversation, animated around him, and in low whispers at our end, was once more localised. I, however, heard Mr. Gladstone relate with schoolboy glee, how he had purchased a book from Quaritch, the antique bookseller, and afterwards selling it, making a profit of ten pounds by the transaction.

When luncheon was over, I apologised to

Miss Helen Gladstone for being so dull to her Oxford friend.

"Not at all," she said, "you were very interesting; but most men of that type are very stupid, that is, on current topics. You see, they are nearly all specialists," she observed, with a smile.

"And I am afraid I was very stupid in my answer to your father, but, you see, I am a muscular, not a mental athlete."

"I think you gave an admirable reply," she rejoined; and this consoled me, especially as Mr. Herbert Gladstone passed a similar judgment later on.

After luncheon we had some tennis, Mr. Herbert Gladstone and Mr. Lewis Harcourt played the Rev. Harry Drew and myself in doubles, and after a hard struggle, beat us. Mr. Harcourt's long reach being principally responsible for the result. After a stroll in the park we returned to afternoon tea. Mrs. Gladstone instantly beckoned me to her side, and when I told her I did not take sugar, she said I was very sensible, she could not imagine any one allaying their thirst by drinking tea with sugar in it. She cross-examined me as to my movements and work at Liverpool.

Then Mr. Gladstone called me to him. I was afraid he was going to re-argue about development, but it was only to ask me various questions about Liverpool. I told him they had placed a plate with an inscription over his birthplace in Rodney Street. He smiled.

"What is Bold Street like now?" he asked.

"Full of fashionable shops, sir. No tramways or heavy traffic is permitted there."

"Bold Street in my day was in the suburbs, and I remember visiting my father's friend, Mr. Thomas Bold. I think they have named the

street after that family—on the left-hand side going into town, and we children used to go into the back garden and pluck cherries from the trees."

"No cherries would grow there now, sir, and the back places are used as receptacles for empty cases, boxes, and crates."

"Dear, dear!" he said, shaking his head sadly.

I told him that we had that morning seen Marine Crescent, Waterloo, where I lived, from the top of the old castle.

"I dare say you would, when the sun sets upon it. It must be fifty miles as the crow flies. What part of the Crescent do you live in?"

I told him.

"You cannot live far from the house where we were sent as children, along with the Stanleys, with our nurses, in order to receive benefit from the sea-air. We liked it exceedingly, and at this distance of time it has pleasant memories for me. In the next garden to ours, we children watched Turner, the painter, sketching and painting cloud effects, which the smoke of Liverpool, combined with the setting sun, gave him."

"Retrospection, sir, must prove a valuable asset to an observing nature like yours."

"Most valuable, but it is not generally appreciated until old age comes, and not always then; much depends upon the faculty of memory."

"Speaking of memory, sir, I remember as a boy a sentence in the first speech I ever heard you make."

"Indeed," he said, turning his dark, luminous eyes upon me, "what was that?"

"It was after your defeat at Oxford University. You were addressing a large crowd of Liverpool men on the Exchange Flags, from T. and H.

Littledales' office. You said, 'Although my spirit is dead at Oxford University, yet my soul, like John Brown's body, is marching on in South-West Lancashire.'"

"That is remarkable," he said, "but I remember the occasion well. Gawthorne Hardy had defeated me at Oxford, and I was paraphrasing a well-known song of the American Civil War when I spoke at Liverpool."

He called Mrs. Gladstone's attention to the incident, and she remarked that I had taken an interest in politics at a very early age.

Mr. Gladstone's secretary, Sir Edward Hamilton, now approached with letters, and I resigned my seat to him, returning to Mrs. Gladstone. I had a slight cough at the time, and received from her a homily on chest protectors, and an excellent cure for coughs and colds. I thanked her, promising to remember her injunctions, and then referred to Mr. Gladstone's wonderful memory.

"Yes," she admitted, "it gives him great happiness to live in retrospection, but he is kept so busy that he is nearly always compelled to live in the 'present.'"

"I think the world is astonished at the versatility of his gifts, and the genius with which he arrays them, with apparently no time for special study."

"I think many of his best thoughts are created when he retires to rest. He usually hangs a small tablet at the head of the bed, and if anything occurs to him, he makes a brief note of it, a word is sufficient, and this he elaborates in the morning."

Mrs. Gladstone had a number of letters, for the most part, she informed me, requests from bazaars and individuals for chip mementoes of Mr. Gladstone's tree-cutting prowess.

"It is growing a perfect craze, it entails much

work, and if he goes on at this rate," she added, smiling, "every one in the country will soon be supplied."

"I am the unhappy exception," I told her.

"We will soon remedy that," she said, laughing; and calling the Rev. Harry Drew, she directed him to go to Mr. Gladstone's study, and bring his paper-weight to her.

"This," she said, handing it to me, "is the last paper-weight which Mr. Gladstone has made. He made it from a laburnum tree which he was obliged to cut down as it darkened the window of his study."

I thanked her for her goodness, and told her I should always value his gift as a happy memory. Mr. Drew offered to show me over the library, and we went there. It was an overcrowded room, and as the shelves were more than well filled, Mr. Gladstone had recourse to an ingenious device of throwing out partitions, something like the wards of a large key, and these, fitted with shelves, were also crowded to excess.

"Every one sends Mr. Gladstone his book," explained Mr. Drew, "and he really hasn't room for a quarter of the books he receives."

He showed me Mr. Gladstone's axes, which were kept behind the library door. They were of the heavy wood-felling type, and appeared very serviceable.

It was now getting rather dark, and candles, the only illumination at Hawarden Castle, were brought in. There was a multitude of them, unlighted, upon the sideboard, and the guests who desired, lighted one and retired to a distant part of the drawing-room, where they wrote or read letters.

As I had promised the Rev. Harry Drew to give an address to the Hawarden Young Men's

Society, I walked with him through the main street of Hawarden to the little hostel which he shared with his fellow-curate, Mr. Derry, a merry-faced disciple of the Church, quite a contrast to his colleague. Together we conspired for the well-being of the young men of the parish. During the temporary absence of Mr. Derry, Mr. Drew told me of his engagement to Miss Gladstone. I congratulated him, and said that I would also congratulate Miss Gladstone when I had the opportunity of doing so.

When I entered the schoolroom to deliver my lecture, I found the room crowded with young men, principally from the Sandycroft Foundry, and in the front row was much surprised to see Mr. W. E. Gladstone, and all the members of the family.

I delivered my lecture, explaining to the men present the delight they received from an acquisition of activity and strength. How it improved their health, and enabled them to do their work better, spoke of the value of ambidexterity, and wound up by expressing the opinion that every village and town in the country should possess a building containing a gymnasium, swimming bath, lecture hall, news room, library, and a room devoted to the games of chess, draughts, etc., and that it was the duty of the authorities to erect and pay for the upkeep of these institutes from the rates. By doing so they would relieve the monotony of village life, and contribute largely to the welfare of the inhabitants, especially in the dark winter months.

These sentiments, as well as the experiments with which I illustrated my remarks, were enthusiastically endorsed by the young men present; but Mr. Gladstone did not let me off scot free, for he heckled me continually.

"Would I explain how I contrived to raise my body by the aid of one finger only? How was it I appeared to use my left arm with equal facility to my right? How did I manage to crush a hard apple with one hand?"

I endeavoured to give physiological replies to all of these questions, and then Mr. Gladstone passed to the subject of village club rooms. He said they were desirable, and would no doubt be greatly appreciated, but considered that the rates of many places could not afford to pay for their maintenance. The question, he thought, was one for philanthropists.

He proposed a vote of thanks to me in very flattering terms; and in reply I expressed a hope that the Hawarden young men would one day obtain a building such as I had sketched out, a hope that was afterwards realised.

## CHAPTER XVIII

### AN IDEAL HOLIDAY

In these days of limitation of labour I remember that my minimum amount of hours per day for work was thirteen, an unlucky number, therefore it generally went into fourteen hours a day. This practice I have followed for the major part of my life. There certainly was a danger of getting "stale," and my only "free" night I gave to the supervision of the new movement for "Recreation amongst the Masses." I gave as much time from this free night as I could to watching over the interests of the Hawarden young men, for I was keen to make them an object lesson, and thus secure the powerful influence of Mr. Gladstone in making physical training a compulsory subject, not only in the army and navy, but in our educational system.

When I visited Hawarden, I generally had an hour or two to spare before the evening's work commenced, and this I utilised by visiting the various objects of interest in the neighbourhood. I sometimes met members of the Gladstone family in my walks. Mrs. Gladstone generally took drives, and always insisted on picking me up when she saw me. Mr. Gladstone, too, always stopped me, and I have often accompanied him on his short walks.

"Now, Mr. Alexander," he said to me one day,

"if physical recreation is your business, what other recreation have you left?"

"Books, sir," I replied, "and walking, and Nature."

"That is a very admirable fitting in of things, and will tend to ease the incessant strain which must inevitably, through the nature of your profession, fall upon you. And now, what kind of books do you read?"

"Well, sir," I replied, "since physiology tells us that a mixed diet is best in dietetics, so in mental food do I derive most benefit from a mixed diet of authors in fiction, history, and biography."

"That is quite right, but in making your choice you should always read the best authors, as you would partake of the most nutritious foods. Now what do you think of my form of exercise—tree-cutting?"

"Most excellent, for there is a motive in the exercise, and it is undertaken under the best conditions of pure country air. There is just one suggestion I would like to make, and that is, you should cut not only from the right side, but from the left side of the body also; that would create a more even development."

"Ah! that is quite impossible, I have not the ambidextrous power, for I have had an injury to one of my fingers, which precludes my ever attaining it."

Whenever we reached the rectory or church, which was the general end of his walk, he would always shake hands with me very heartily, and wish me a cordial good night.

I have always been glad that I have personally known Mr. Gladstone. He was a great man, sincere and sympathetic with his fellow-creatures, and in his desire to help to make the world better. His table was most democratic: I have met at

luncheon not only noble lords, famous politicians, and great scholars, but on one occasion my right-hand neighbour asked me in a whisper, "whether I felt inclined to make a deal in athletic clothing."

I had a fairly long holiday in the summer-time, and I took advantage of this to pay a flying visit to Dublin. I was taken rather aback on the following morning by a couple of Press interviewers waiting upon me. The head-lines of the paper placards mentioned my arrival in Dublin, etc. The Colonel of the South Wales Borderers invited me to inspect his regiment in physical drill, which I did at Phœnix Park. Altogether I received quite an "Irish welcome," which much surprised me.

Their personal welcomes were so unique, so different from those met with in England. Going down Grafton Street I met a man that I knew. He stopped short a few paces off me, threw back his arms right and left, to the imminent danger of his fellow-citizens, and in stentorian tones shouted, "Holy Moses! Is that yourself, Alexander?" then seizing my hands with both his, and trying to wring my arms off. Other pedestrians would stop short, look on at the incident, and after making an observation or two, would walk on, shaking their heads significantly. Of course, if I had not been a total abstainer, I should have been made drunk many times.

I found my dear old landlord, Mr. Macken, quieter, much concerned about the wrong-doings of the Land-leaguers, and expressing his opinion that "the country was going to the dogs." Ned, his son, was much the same, except that he carried a hirsute advertisement on his face. His countenance was young, his eyes dull, but his enormous whiskers and moustache were panoramic. He told me that one of the whiskers was the Balfour

pattern, and his beard was an imitation of Parnell's. The other portions of his hairy ornaments being imitations of those worn by Dillon, O'Brien, and other famous patriots. I was reluctantly obliged, through press of time, to refuse his kind offer to play me a violin obligato.

I had noticed large bills announcing that Signor Andrea and his mystic lady sphinx were the leading stars at one of the places of amusement. It appeared from the bills that they could read the stars, everybody's thoughts, and make miracles look very foolish indeed in the light of their psychical research. I was thinking of going to see these marvels when going up Sackville Street on my way to the Post Office, I met a little man who stared hard at me. He was dressed most elaborately, and not wishing to pass any of my old friends, I stopped him.

"I think I know you," said I.

He grasped my hand. "Sullivanski," he whispered, "in the old days, now Signor Andrea in the psychical business."

"Good gracious!" I said, "what a clever chap you must be!"

"There's not much in it," he said dolefully. "I get a good salary, but I pay half of it away to my assistants, that I have to scatter about the audience."

"Well," said I, "you really are a marvel. When I first met you, you were defying muscle, and now you are defying mind; but I thought you told me that you were going to become a member of Parliament?"

"I'll finish up with that," said he, with a mystic smile. "I'm larning to spake better, the rest is easy enough. Denounce the Government, kill a policeman, and there ye are. Come and have a dhrink."

I had luncheon with Sullivanski, or rather Signor Andrea, and found him most entertaining. That evening I rode on my bicycle to Kildare, about thirty miles out of Dublin; as I did not start until after six o'clock, and the roads were rough, I had to hurry in order to get back in time. The times were troublesome, and I passed many processions and meetings of Land-leaguers on my way.

It was dark when I left Kildare on my return to Dublin, and I had to use some tactics in getting past the noisy crowds which I could scarcely make out in the darkness. When I got on to a very dark part of the road I thought I heard a groan; the roadway was covered over by trees, and I could scarcely see in front of me. The groan was repeated, and not wishing to imitate the Pharisee, I dismounted and went to the hedge from where the groan proceeded. When I got close up, I found it was a cow, her head leaning on the aforesaid hedge.

Feeling a little disgusted, I again mounted and continued my journey. I had not gone more than a mile or two, before I heard another groan. "More cows!" I thought, but this time the cow spoke.

"Holy St. Patrick!" it went on, "what will become of me?"

This time I knew it to be a genuine case, and again dismounting I made my way to where the speech was audible. I found a man with his back leaning against the hedge, a bicycle by his side, and himself nursing his ankle.

"Hello," said I, "what's up?"

"What's up," said the man; "it's not what's up, but what's down. That blithering bicycle first comes down, and then it's myself that comes down."

"Have you hurt yourself?" I inquired.

"Hurt myself, is it?" said he, "and what do yez think I'm doing here, groaning aloud? Does yez think I do it for amusement? It's killed I am, that's the plain truth, not myself alone, but the ould bike there too, and twenty miles off Dublin. That's a bit of a fix for ye."

I examined him and found that his ankle was swollen, and then turned my attention to the bicycle. It was of the old high type, and I found it was all right with the exception that one of the treadles was bent and which I straightened. I suggested that I should ride back a little way to a country public-house and get a little whisky to rub his ankle with, after which I would assist him to mount, and he could ride with one treadle, if he found he could not use the other foot. He called me "a dacent man," and I rode back about half a mile, obtained the necessary alcohol and gave it to him, telling him to rub the part and up the side of the leg with the spirit. I then took the machine into the roadway to test it, and to find out a suitable high bank from which he could mount it. On my return I heard a distinct gurgling, and hurrying to the spot, found my patient drinking the whisky.

"Hold hard," said I, "that's to rub your ankle with, it's not to drink."

"It's a pity to waste such good stuff," said he, "and we'll rub the ankle with the bottle."

With some difficulty I mounted him on his machine and giving him a push off, mounted my own bicycle, and followed him. He was full of lamentations all the way, calling upon all the saints in heaven to help him, and several times dismounted, dropping sideways on to his sound foot, wishing all the time that he had some more whisky. I would again assist in mounting him,

give him a push off, and follow him on my own machine. This happened several times before we reached Dublin in the small hours of the morning, when we were stopped on the outskirts by a small patrol of R.I.C. men, who wanted to take both of us into custody as suspicious characters.

It was our habit, as persons of very moderate means, to take our limited summer holidays in the most primitive fashion, so that we could make believe that we were traversing far-off countries or uninhabited islands. We never quite achieved this in the United Kingdom, but it was our custom to look up Bradshaw's railway map and find out a piece of the coast where there were no railways. We would then write to the postmaster of the nearest town, and ask particulars of the unknown coast. We usually got a polite reply, and then made a descent upon the locality chosen. This summer we found ourselves at Oxwich Bay, on the south coast of Glamorgan. Its precise locality was on a peninsula known as Gowerland, and about fifteen miles from Swansea. At this latter town we met our friends, Mr. and Mrs. B. H. Payne, principals of the Royal Cambrian Institution for the Deaf and Dumb, with their son Arnold, now the Rev. A. H. Payne, Mr. E. Sully, Director of the Exeter Hall Gymnasium, my brother Edward, and G. C., an old friend. These, with Mrs. Alexander and myself, completed our party.

Starting from Swansea, we with our luggage filled two conveyances. The drive was a delightful one, and can nowhere be excelled in the kingdom for beauty of foliage, visions of hills, babbling brooks, and peeps of the sea. It is the garden of Wales, and the Welsh people are naturally very proud of it. We passed on our right on the

crest of the hill, and standing in beautiful grounds, a noble pile of buildings. We inquired from the driver whose palace it was, but were informed that it was the workhouse for the county of Glamorgan. Lucky paupers ! It was worth while being one of your number to live in such princely environment.

New beauties of colour and freshness in foliage met us at every turn, but we could see nothing of the promised bay. Suddenly we stopped in the middle of a roadway densely wooded at either side. On the left there was a small lodge, and our driver dismounting, held a parley with the lodgekeeper in Welsh, and, unlike George Borrow, being unacquainted with the mysteries of the Welsh tongue, we waited patiently while a torrent of etymological fireworks took place. Then to our surprise the lodgekeeper opened his gate wide. The driver reseated himself, and we entered what appeared to be a magnificent domain. It was, the driver informed us, the seat of the Talbot Llewelyns, and was the only safe way of taking a vehicle to Oxwich Bay. We passed through these lovely grounds, and out through another gate into the open, when we came upon a view which fairly astonished us. In our immediate vicinity the foliage was rich in colour, the wild rhododendron predominating. At the front there was a mixture of wild nature that I had never seen before. There were jungles, impassable shrubberies, and a swamp, thick with bulrushes ; over the tops of these there appeared to be a velvet lawn, then sand-dunes and the blue sea beyond. To the right and left there were high wooded cliffs, on the tops of which wild moorland stretched away east and west. At the foot of these woods there were great serrated rocks, upon which the waves dashed with precipitate violence, sending up aerial

cascades of dripping spray. On a shelf of these rocks there was a little Roman church, and a few yards away some half-dozen fishermen's cottages, and in these cottages we managed to find accommodation. Mrs. A. and myself were fortunate enough to stay at the house of the coastguard, a model of cleanliness. In a short time we were out like a party of excited school children, exploring the neighbourhood.

Some went to the left of the bay to consider the possibilities of bathing. The ladies picked wild flowers, and I clambered behind the church on the right-hand side of the bay, up a steep headland on to the moor above. When I peeped over the top, I came upon a snake, which being equally startled, bounded off in a series of convolutions, in a manner that would have done credit to any champion sprinter.

We returned to make our various reports, and thereafter commenced a delightful holiday. Bathing in the mornings, single wicket in the afternoons, and boating in the evenings, with honest Davies, the coastguardsman, to look after us. As for the incidents that took place, are they not written in the retrospective memories of all concerned, and merely recorded here in gratitude to Nature for helping to make the life of the Wayfarer joyous and happy ?

We made many excursions over rocks and moorland. I paid a visit to Castle Farm, an old, ancient building, half castle and half farm. I spoke to old Grandfather Bevan, whom report said was approaching his century of years. He seemed to take very little interest in anything, and was no doubt waiting for the eternal rest which comes to all. I asked him if he had heard of Gladstone or Disraeli ? He shook his head.

"No," he said; "Pitt and Peel and Melbourne were the politicians of my day. I never cared for politicians," he went on; "I prefer farmers, and men that work."

He relapsed into a slumber; happy "son of Evan."

When I approached the edge of the cliff and looked down on the blue waters, I saw a novel sight. A man was floating on his back in the middle of the bay, with something white above his head. It was my brother Edward, an expert swimmer, who was reading his newspaper in this unique fashion.

On the Sabbath we attended the little church, and nearly filled it with our own party. When the evenings grew dark, we had debates at the coastguard's. B. H. P. represented our common sense; E. S. optimism; G. C. pessimism; A. P. and E. A. youth and pleasure. I was supposed to be the philosopher. The conversations were not models of unanimity. Davies was much amused and the ladies were long-sufferers.

## CHAPTER XIX

### ARRESTED AT THE COMMONS

At the close of our holiday we agreed to meet on the following summer at the wildest part of Cornwall that we could hit upon. I had received a letter from Mr. Herbert Gladstone in which he wrote, "The more I think about your scheme of physical recreation amongst the working classes, the more I like it, and I am quite prepared to help in any possible way I can."

I accordingly organised a meeting to take place at Exeter Hall. On our way to London, Mrs. Alexander and myself thought we would like to take a look at Windsor Castle, and stopped at Windsor for the purpose. After enjoying ourselves on the river, we entered the castle grounds, and like the pair of provincial trippers that we were, wandered off the beaten track. We were just entering a tiny lawn to peep into some windows, when a sentry pulled us up sharply, and demanded our business. We acknowledged that we had none.

While he was expressing his opinion about us, he stopped short, whispered, "The Queen," and presented arms. I uncovered, and Mrs. Alexander looked very respectful. Queen Victoria came out of one french window, and stepped on to the lawn to pass into another apartment on the opposite side. When we made room for her to

pass, the little lady, instead of ordering our execution, smiled sweetly upon us. After she had disappeared the sentry, very red in the face, said—

"Now you have seen the Queen, you had better clear off as soon as you can."

We did so, but our adventure was not quite over yet, for hurrying to catch our train to town, we rushed into the station over some crimson cloth, and entered an empty carriage just as the train was moving off. The compartment we had entered was a luxurious one, the whole front of it being occupied with plate-glass windows to the floor. At the other side of this glass division there was a beautiful lady whom I at once recognised as Princess—afterwards Queen—Alexandra. She was accompanied by her two daughters. I again uncovered, and Mrs. Alexander looked exceedingly respectful, but as we were fixed there for a good hour before the train reached Paddington, we felt it to be an awkward dilemma; not so the Royal party, for the Princess, having rightly conjectured that we were a couple of her stupid, but dutiful, subjects, smiled graciously upon us, and then, taking a book, commenced to read, or rather endeavoured to do so, but the young princesses by their kittenish mischief rendered this impossible, and she was perforce obliged to give up the attempt and romp with her children. It was a pretty domestic scene, and proves that human nature is much the same all the world over.

When we arrived at Paddington, there was much fuss and laying of crimson cloth, and the Princess, with another gracious smile, and the young princesses with a merry look as they tried to frame their expressions into royal dignity, passed through the guard of honour to their carriage. The guard of honour looked at us

askance and closed their ranks without waiting for us to pass through.

The meeting at Exeter Hall was informal, but quite successful, and was adjourned to meet on the following day at 10, Downing Street. This proved to be an influential gathering, and included Mr. H. J. Gladstone, Lord C. Beresford, Lord Kinnaird, Lord Harris, the Hon. and Rev. E. Lyttelton, Hon. T. H. W. Pelham, Thomas Edwards-Moss (Diamond Sculls), and many M.P.'s and patrons of sport. The meeting elected Mr. H. J. Gladstone president; Lord Kinnaird, Hon. Treasurer, and A. Alexander, Hon. Secretary. I had asked Mr. W. E. Gladstone, Lord Wolseley, and A. G. Steel (captain of the English cricket eleven) as respresenting politics, the army, and sport, for a few lines in support of the movement, and these I read to the meeting.

Mr. Gladstone wrote, "I consider the object in view worthy of support, and hope it will prove a great success."

Lord Wolseley in his letter said, "The subject is one in which I take the greatest interest, for I feel that the physical condition of future generations in England depends very much upon the physical development of the young men of to-day. In all great continental nations this question is well met by the army training which every young man must undergo just at that time of life when manly exercise, especially in the open air, is of the first consequence to health and development of strength."

Mr. A. G. Steel wrote expressing his strong concurrence with the movement and offering personal help.

I unfolded my plans, which included the provision of national challenge shields for competition amongst gymnasia, army and navy

services, universities, public schools, cricket and football teams. Lord Harris took exception to offering a prize for cricket, and Lord Kinnaird said the Football Association already had a cup. With these exceptions the proposals were agreed to. Somebody proposed that the society should have a motto: whereupon everybody quoted from their school memories, quotations from the Latin and Greek poets, but none seemed quite to answer the purpose. Dr. Lyttelton asked me if I could remember anything suitable. Whereupon I quoted Juvenal's maxim, "*Civium vires civitatis vis*"—"The strength of the citizen is the strength of the State." This was agreed to amidst applause, and I rose in the estimation of the meeting.

When we were in the middle of a discussion of ways and means, the door of the Council Chamber was flung open, and a brawny bricklayer, carrying an empty hod on his shoulder, strolled to the window. This he opened, causing a terrible draught, and making everybody seize his notes. The son of toil seized hold of a very ragged-looking rope which hung suspended from a pulley above the window.

"Another 'od, Bill," he shouted.

The meeting shivered. "I wonder how long that man is going to stay there?" inquired Mr. H. Gladstone.

"Not long, if he trusts to that rope," hazarded Lord C. Beresford.

When the "hod" came up, the British workman, glancing contemptuously at the idle rich, strolled on his way, and Mr. Gladstone got up and locked the door after him.

It was found necessary to adjourn the meeting until the morning, and as politics were in a state of tension at that time, Mr. H. Gladstone inquired of Lord Charles—

"Do you think we shall be in office over to-morrow morning, so that we may have the meeting here?"

"No," replied Lord Beresford, "I think you will be thrown out to-night."

This proved to be the case, and the adjourned meeting was held at Lord Kinnaird's house in Pall Mall East.

Subsequent meetings were held at the House of Commons. When I attended the first of these, carrying a small black bag, containing the minute book and other papers, I was seized at the door, and placed under arrest. The times were troublesome; the Land-leaguers had forecasted explosives in the House of Commons. I told the brawny policeman that held me in charge to send for Mr. H. Gladstone; and he replied that they would examine my bag first. And it was some time before Lord Kinnaird, who happened to be passing, came and set me at liberty.

We searched everywhere for a quiet corner in which to hold our meeting; finally we went down some steps into a semi-crypt, but found, to our disgust, that the Irish party were holding a meeting there. Mr. Parnell, who was in the chair, looked up with great disdain at the Saxon invasion, and other members of his body glared at us threateningly. We, however, put on our best smiles, and proceeding to the end of the chamber, Mr. Gladstone opened a door, and we entered a small octagon-shaped room. It had a small oak table in the centre, with fine, heavy, oak chairs around it. It was dimly lighted.

"Hello," said Mr. Gladstone, in some surprise, "this is the room where Oliver Cromwell signed the death warrant of King Charles."

"I hope it won't witness the death warrant of our society," remarked one of us.

When this meeting was over, Lord Beresford took me to the distinguished Strangers' Gallery. I protested, but when he said that it was frequently filled with idiots and fools, I no longer objected. It was my first visit to the House of Commons, and I greatly enjoyed the speeches, and noticed how the reputation of speakers held or ruffled the House. If a "nobody" got up, everybody seemed to engage in conversation, and the buzz of many voices filled the air. Then suddenly a death-like silence ensued, yawns gave way to sighs of relief.

"What is the matter?" I whispered of my neighbour.

"Joe is going to speak," he whispered back, impressively; and then for the first time I heard the cold, inflexible and incisive articulation of Mr. Chamberlain, and knew what was meant by the enthralling power of oratory. Mr. Gladstone replied to him in slow, measured, and musical sentences. Lord Randolph Churchill took exception and threw an explosive interruption across the floor. Mr. Balfour, in polite and academic utterances, endeavoured to throw oil on the troubled waters, the Irish members casting spasmodic squibs at every speaker. Mr. Gladstone appearing hurt, Lord Randolph crossed the floor and said something to him which brought smiles once more upon his careworn face.

On another occasion, Mr. H. Gladstone, wishing to have a word with me, placed me on the seat in front of the Irish Party; the latter were bent upon obstruction, and when the representative of the Admiralty was explaining the navy estimates, they put up one after another of their party to make obstructive speeches. One man had been speaking for three-quarters of an hour upon a subject of which he was entirely ignorant, when

his vocabulary seemed at last to be giving way.

"Yes, then there's the question of—there's the question of——" he muttered, looking down at his fellow-conspirators.

"Boilers," whispered one of them.

"There's the question of boilers," he went on, and for a quarter of an hour he spoke on that question. Tiring again, he once more commenced—

"Then there's the question of—there's the question of——" looking once more appealingly at his brother Hibernians.

"Rashuns," whispered one, in a deep Celtic brogue.

"There's the question of rations," he went on with renewed energy, and for another quarter of an hour that topic occupied the House. He got one or two more promptings, but finally sat down, with a whispered remark, "It's terrible thirsty I am," and left the Chamber.

Then the Division bell rang, members hurried into their respective lobbies, and I was left alone in supreme occupation of an empty House of Commons. It was a startling transformation scene. I was just commencing to ruminate on the weakness of human vanities, when a gorgeously attired official approached me.

"What are you doing here, sir?" he said sternly.

"Waiting for Mr. Herbert Gladstone," I replied.

He looked at me suspiciously, as though I were a modern Guy Fawkes.

"Don't you know, sir, that no one is allowed to wait in the House when a Division is on?"

"No," I again replied.

"Come this way, sir," placing a huge and fat

hand upon my shoulder. He marched me off, and gave me into the charge of a policeman, remarking, "I found him on the floor of the House. Hand him to the Inspector." Then, turning on his heels, stalked away.

"Stay there," commanded the policeman, propping me up against the wall; then blowing his whistle, another policeman appeared on the scene.

"Take him to the Inspector," said the first policeman; "he was found on the floor of the House."

"Come this way," said Number Two, and he took me to the Inspector. "Sit down there," said the Inspector, and he proceeded to cross-examine me. In the midst of this, Mr. J. A. Pease, a Junior Whip, appeared, and with many apologies, released me.

I left the House, and walked to Piccadilly, where I entered an A.B.C. shop, to get a cup of tea. It was rather crowded, but opposite the door there was a small marble-topped table where there were only three occupants; a tall, long-bearded gentleman occupied the centre seat, a cabman on his right hand, and a newsboy, with his bundle of papers on his knee, on his left. I took the fourth unoccupied seat. I gave my orders. The tall, bearded man, who had a glass of milk and a bun before him, stared hard at me. Then said—

"Are you not Mr. Alexander, of Liverpool?"

"Yes," I replied.

"I am Lord Meath," he said, smiling, and extended his hand. "I am very happy to meet so distinguished a worker in the cause of physical education as yourself. It is a subject in which I take a great interest."

I told him I felt it an honour to meet him, and

we spoke on various branches of philanthropy, in which he was interested. Then the conversation lapsed to Liverpool. He told me that his was an old Liverpool family, and that their family residence once stood on the site now occupied by Brabazon Row, near to the Liverpool Docks. We left together, and as we departed, I heard the cabman say to the newsboy—

"Well, blow me, fancy a real live lord a-feedin' on milk an' a bloomin' bun."

I did not hear the sympathetic reply of the newsboy, but that evening I was to have another surprise. I was in the promenade at Olympia, looking on at the French Hippodrome, when a tall, dignified-looking gentleman, with a venerable beard, approached, and shaking hands with me, asked how Liverpool was getting along. It was some moments before I realised that I was speaking to the Earl of Lathom. He told me that he had invested some capital in Olympia, but feared the latter would become a "white elephant."

These haphazard meetings were very gratifying to me, and convinced me that the English aristocrat is much less of a snob than the plebeian who has risen from the ranks.

I was passing through Chester on one occasion when I saw Colonel Scotland, private secretary to the Duke of Westminster, approaching. He was accompanied by an elderly gentleman with a very kindly face. The Colonel stopped me.

"Your Grace," said he, for it was the old Duke, "allow me to introduce to you Mr. Alexander, of whom I have spoken to you before."

The Duke shook hands heartily. "Scotland," he said, looking at his secretary, "thinks you are a prodigy."

"'Strong o' the arm, and weak 'o the yed,'" I admitted.

"Well, well," said the Duke, smiling, "it is better to have a strong body than a weak head, and I hear that you can do prodigious feats of strength. Do you box at all?"

I told him that I did, but that the Y.M.C.A. Committee that had charge of the Liverpool Gymnasium did not allow it.

"Tut, tut, how foolish; it is a splendid thing for boys, strengthening their moral as well as their physical being."

"I am glad your Grace approves of boxing."

"One of the best fights I ever had at Eton was with the Earl of Derby" (uncle to the present Earl). "It was a ding-dong affair, and there was not much between us, but I won by a 'neck.'"

He felt my muscles, and asked me some questions about boxing, much to the amusement of the bystanders. He said he would like to see me work, and especially my sword feats, and these I afterwards performed for him, illiciting much praise from him. Before we parted, I said—

"Would your Grace mind very much if I ask you a rude question?"

"Not at all," he said, smiling.

"I have often heard of your philanthropy and goodness of heart, but I have heard people say that they consider it inconsistent for you to bet on horses."

"No one," he replied, "should bet unless they can afford to do so, and then they should do it for the sport, and not for the intrinsic value of the bet. As for racing, it is a grand sport, and I shall always do my best to encourage it, and the breeding of horses."

I must give one more instance of the good nature of the English nobility. I had organised a demonstration to take place at the Liverpool

Gymnasium, at which the Earl of Derby (father of the present Earl) was to preside. I had arranged for other guests to meet his lordship, and half an hour before the time was waiting for my visitors, when a gentleman entered my room, and inquired what time we were going to commence. I told him, and assuming that he was one of the guests, invited him to take a chair "near to the fire." We had a very interesting conversation about all sorts of topics, in which my visitor appeared to be remarkably well informed, but it was not until a quarter of an hour later, when Alderman Roberts came in and addressed my visitor as Lord Derby, that I realised to whom I had been talking.

When the proceedings were over, Lord Derby told me that he would like to place his son under my training, but that he was afraid he was too big.

"You will now," he said, "have to wait until my grandchildren grow up."

Some time afterwards, when I related the above incident to the Hon. Arthur Stanley, he laughed and said, "The grandchildren are quite as big as their father now," Lord Stanley having reached six feet three at seventeen years of age.

## CHAPTER XX

### LITERARY CELEBRITIES

At the close of one of my annual visits to Aldershot, the Army Gymnasium Staff presented me with a sword, and as I was booked to give a lecture at Warrington, I called at Oxley's, the cutlers, at Liverpool, to have an "edge" put upon the blade, a precaution which I always took before performing sword feats. On the same morning I reflected that my schoolboy watch was becoming the worse for wear, and that it was high time I should purchase a new one. I accordingly called at the principal jeweller's shop in the town, "R. Jones & Sons," opposite to the Town Hall.

As I entered the shop, Mr. C. Jones accosted me with—

"I see by the papers that the Aldershot people have been presenting you with a sword."

"Yes," I said, "I have it here. Would you like to see it?" and unbuttoning my ulster, I showed him the weapon. He examined it critically.

"I suppose," said he, "these sword feats of yours are all trickery?"

"No," said I, "no trickery; merely continual practice." Then a sudden inspiration seized me. "Suppose," said I, "I cut an apple upon the glass of one of those watches, in two halves with one downward cut, without cracking the glass, would you give me the watch?"

He paused for breath, then, "What about my watch, if you smash it?"

"I will buy it off you, providing you let me have it at cost price."

He hesitated, looking at me dubiously. "Have you ever done it before?" he asked.

"Never," I answered.

He still hesitated.

"It's a sporting offer," I remarked. "If I damage the watch I get it cheaply, and if I win, you lose the watch; but I would show it to the editor of the *Daily Post*, and he, and probably some other papers, would relate the incident, and thus give you an excellent advertisement."

After a long pause, he said, "I'll try it, but we must have two umpires;" and he sent up to some offices over the shop, and two gentlemen came down, to whom he explained the position.

"That's all right," said they, "it's a sporting offer, and we will see it through."

I then chose a watch, finally selecting a gold English lever, the price of which was twenty-five guineas, but which, if I damaged, I was to pay twenty guineas for. I then went outside into Castle Street, and purchased an apple from the basket of an old woman, and bringing it back, submitted it to the umpires. They pronounced it sound, and having placed it on the glass of the watch, which lay upon a glass case on the counter, I drew my sword, and with a sharp, downward cut, severed the apple. One half of the apple lay at one side, and the other half at the other side of the watch, attached by the skin only. The umpires examined the apple and then the watch.

"It is yours," they said, and gave it to me.

Mr. Jones looked glum. "You will have a good advertisement out of this watch." I told

him, which proved to be the case, for the paragraph recording the feat, not only appeared in the Liverpool papers, but in almost every paper in the country. Only one paper, the *Globe*, was sceptical on the matter. It printed a scurrilous article reflecting upon my *bona fides*, and certainly laying themselves open to libel; but I decided to take the criticism in a sporting spirit, and wrote the Editor, simply telling him he was mistaken, and that I should be happy to do it on his own watch, next time I came to London. He apologised profusely, and there the matter ended.

A few days afterwards, when passing Russell's watch manufactory in Church Street, Liverpool, Mr. Thomas Russell, who was standing at the door, beckoned me in. Placing a silver watch upon the glass case of his counter, he said—

"Place an apple upon the glass of that watch, and cut it in two with your sword, and you can have the watch."

"I cannot do it on a silver watch," I said, "but I will try it on a gold one."

He shook his head. "Good morning," said he.

"Good morning," said I, and we parted.

When I gave my lecture at Warrington, the Mayor, who presided, and who had an abnormally developed waist, was subjected to much familiar criticism by the audience.

"Tommy," said one, "why do'st thee not tak' lecturer's advice?"

"He's bound to make a good mayor," said another, "when he has such a good 'corporation.'"

When the mayor returned thanks to the lecturer, he said—

"I suppose I have toes, but it's nigh twenty years since I saw them, and I'd give twenty punds if I could tie my own shoe-laces."

I now tried my luck with the pen, more

powerful than the sword, and wrote a short manual on drill, and having wrapped the manuscript in a small parcel, I took it to the publishing houses in Liverpool. I first called at the Liverpool Publishing Company's shop, and asked to see the manager ; but he was too great a person to be seen, and I was dismissed by the office-boy. I next called on Mr. Howell, who advised me to call on G. Philip and Sons. I called and saw Mr. George Philip. I told him the object of my visit, and laid the parcel on the table.

"Take it away," he said, "it's not in our line. You keep to the sword, and leave the pen alone."

"But, Mr. Philip," I urged, "suppose the little book was a success, it would be good for your firm and for me, and supply a want in the schools."

He took up the parcel, opened it, glanced at it, weighed it in his hand as though it were sausage, then said—

"I'll think about it. Good morning."

In two or three days I received a letter from him, offering me fifty pounds, and ten per cent. royalty for the manuscript, and since "Musical Drill" was published I have received considerable sums in royalties, and the publishers some hundreds, by the venture. When its success became known the chairman of the Liverpool Publishing Company called upon me, and asked me to give them a chance. I replied that I had first taken the manuscript to them, but that the manager refused to see me. He was surprised, and very cross. Since then I have written many technical books, some novels, and even poetry, under different *nom des plumes*, none of which set the world ablaze ; but the chance of my life happened in the latter end of the eighties, and I regret to say I missed it.

I was one evening taking a short rest at my house in Marine Crescent, Waterloo, watching the funnels of the Cunard greyhounds, as they passed now and then, a stone's throw in front of my windows, when a singularly handsome man was ushered in. He was fair, and had engaging manners. He handed me a letter of introduction from a mutual friend in Dublin, and said his name was Harmsworth. I asked him to be seated, and ordered tea. While this was being prepared he at once made known the object of his visit. He had, he said, a scheme which would make the publishing world "wake up." He then hinted at the issue of a weekly paper containing answers to everybody who cared to ask questions, and asked my opinion about it. I told him that it sounded well, and that it ought to prove a success, providing there was sufficient capital to keep it to the front for a short time.

"Yes," he replied, "capital is necessary. Would you care to invest anything in the scheme?"

I shook my head. "My limited capital is already invested, and I am afraid I do not favour publishing schemes unless there is plenty of capital and force behind them."

He smiled a kind of "Oh, thou of little faith" smile, and said that he agreed with me, but that he intended to try, and exacted a promise that I would look him up when next I visited London. After a pleasant half-hour we parted, and in a week or two I received a letter from him, giving the address, 123A (I think), Paternoster Row, and as I had to go up to London the following week, I at once fulfilled my promise of calling upon him. Lord Northcliffe owes me a ten-pound note for the time I lost in trying to find that address. I searched in attics. I searched in

cellars, in drawing-rooms and bedrooms, to say nothing of counting-houses and paper-warehouses, but all to no purpose; but, being an athlete and capable of some endurance, I determined to have one more try, and asked a "loafer" if it was possible for any one to live or reside anywhere in Paternoster Row beyond the places aforesaid.

He said, "There's a cove as goes hup there," motioning to a very narrow entrance with his thumb. "I dunno where 'e goes, but I reckon somewhere hup on the roof."

"What sort of looking gentleman is he?" I asked.

"Oh, a good-looking bloke, and wears a 'topper.'"

"Fair?" I asked.

"That's all I can tell yer," he said, again motioning me to the aperture.

I entered, and climbed a staircase as nearly resembling a climbing-pole as anything I have seen. After I had gone up a few storeys, it got dark, but, being determined, I pierced the gloom, and stumbled against a narrow doorway. The door instantly opened. It was a very small apartment; inside was a table and two chairs. A lady typist was busy at work with her machine; the other, dictating to her, was Mr. Harmsworth. He shook hands, invited me to sit down, but I think, to do this, he had himself to go out. On the table there was a small pile of *Answers*, not the gorgeous golden *Answers* of to-day, but a primitive, scantily attired, typewritten prodigy, containing answers to every conceivable question. He read portions of one for me. I approved, and then showed him my newly acquired watch. He laughed. We parted, both, I think, very pleased with ourselves. He with his pen, I with my sword.

The pen has reached the skies ; the journalistic "Plan-it" has become the publishing planet. The sword, from its scabbard, congratulates, in wonder, the mighty pen.

I have by me a letter written in a round schoolboy's hand. It is from the editor of a school magazine, asking if I would contribute an article on Swordsmanship. The writer was G. W. Stevens, who afterwards became one of Lord Northcliffe's most famous correspondents.

Here is a strange but interesting letter that I once received from the late John MacGregor, M.A. ("Rob Roy"). He wrote—

"My dear friend H. was a good, plucky little man, but he had only one lung, yet he was a splendid swimmer and diver.

One day he had to go on board a steamer which was twenty feet distant from the pier, so a plank was placed across to walk on.

Now a very fat man, a passenger, went on the plank, and it bent with the load. Next, another big passenger came too. So there were three on the plank, and it broke, and all fell into the water. I and all the bystanders shouted, 'Save them! save them!' but nobody was seen except the little man with one lung.

He dived at once, and brought up one of the fat men and pushed him to the land. Then he pulled the other man to the paddle of the steamer and saved him, and then all the soaking ones were put to bed, and the steamer started.

The next day the three men were at breakfast at the same table, but two of them did not even say 'Thank you.'

I saw all this, and I shall never forget it."

I once endeavoured to persuade the Duke of Argyll, uncle of the present Duke, to write an article upon "Anthropology." He replied, "I

am sorry that my hands are so full of other work that I cannot undertake to write on the subject to which you refer, which, however, I the less regret, as I think others will do it better."

I now submitted a novel to Messrs. Smith, Elder and Co. Mr. James Payn, who was their reader, wrote me a very kind letter, praising the fiction, but condemning the facts. The latter being certain feats, which I had ascribed to the hero.

I wrote to Mr. Payn, saying I would be very glad to come to London and perform the feats which he had denounced as impossible; but unfortunately he died a few days afterwards. My MS. must have been the last that he read, and I am aware of the possible share it may have had in his untimely death. I sent my MS. to another publisher, by whom it was accepted.

I once had the good fortune to meet Professor Blackie. Travelling in a railway compartment between Dundee and Edinburgh, I found the only other occupant of the compartment was a man possessed of a very striking and picturesque appearance. His features were rugged and expressive, white silver hair fell on to his shoulders, and his shepherd's plaid was wrapped well round his chest. He spoke to me in a pleasant Scotch accent.

"Have you ever seen a bridge the like of that before?" with a motion of his hand towards the Tay Bridge.

I admitted that I had not seen one with all its varied characteristics, but I mentioned several that I had seen abroad, especially the picturesque one at Berne in Switzerland, which I told him was constructed by an English firm.

"Probably, probably," he ejaculated, "but the engineer was most likely a Scotchman. Are you English?" he inquired of me.

"Born in England of Irish parents," I replied.

"Ah! then you ought to get on in the world. Take the Irish Celt out of his own country—or a Scot for the matter of that—and he is sure to make his presence and his influence felt."

I asked him the reason for his theory.

"Where all are of one shape and one sound, one is apt to be passed over, like the grass in a field, but place a poppy there and it is seen at once."

He spoke of the merits and demerits of various countries, and wound up by asking me what I thought of Edinburgh.

I told him that I admired it very much, but that I considered it had one blot.

"What is that?" he demanded sharply.

"If your railway, which runs through the city, had been instead a limpid stream, I think the eye would be better pleased."

"Yes, yes," he replied quickly, "I think all Scotchmen will agree with you there, but one of the curses of civilisation is that we must have railway stations."

When we arrived at Edinburgh, he shook hands with me, and I said I should like to know his name.

"Blackie—Professor Blackie," he said, smiling.

"I thought so," I returned, "but I cannot tell you why I thought so."

"Good-bye," he laughed; "see what you can of Edinburgh before you go South."

## CHAPTER XXI

### SCOTTISH HUMOUR

THE competitions and demonstrations organised by the National Physical Recreation Society, in order to call attention to its work, were on a large scale, and proved very popular with the general public. In one of the first, at the Olympia, I had charge of a class of five thousand young men who underwent various physical drills. I was perched on a platform sixty feet high, at one end of the big building, so that all of my pupils in the arena could see me. The music was supplied by the band of the London Rifle Brigade, and it proved a very fine spectacle. We also gave another fête at the Liverpool Exhibition, in connection with which I taught a class of eight hundred news-boys and street arabs, who attended in their ordinary everyday clothing, in many cases rags. They went through their movements to the music of the Liverpool police band, singing and whistling in unison at intervals, and performing their work with great spirit and enthusiasm. Lord Wolseley, who presided, was very pleased, and told me that he was quite a convert to musical drill, and would not in future place any obstacle in permitting soldiers to indulge in singing and whistling or band music during their exercises or route marching.

A rather curious incident happened at this demonstration. At its conclusion, the gas-man,

by mistake, turned off the gas, and plunged the vast building into total darkness. As there were over ten thousand spectators, things were becoming lively.

"Take my arm, Lord Wolseley," I said; "it will never do for England to lose her 'only' General in this ignominious way."

He laughed, and grasped my arm, then used strong language, and afterwards laughed again, until I piloted him safely out of the building, when he drove off to General Earles' house, where he was staying.

The Liverpool Exhibition was a very large building, with ample and well-arranged grounds attached to it. It was opened by Queen Victoria, and as she was announced to pass the Liverpool Gymnasium in her official entry to the town, I asked my committee to supply our flagstaff with a flag in order to display it, and show our loyalty; but the committee were obdurate and unpatriotic, and refused. "They did not recognise any monarchy," they said. I asked them would they do so when they got to heaven? But I did not get the flag, so I purchased a large one myself, which I proudly ran up to the top of the flagstaff. Moreover, I lined the outline of the building with pretty children in their gymnastic costumes, and myself, in costume, stood on a plinth about forty feet high at the front of the building, in order to lead the cheering as the Royal carriage passed. Alas! all my efforts were in vain, for when the Queen saw my apparently dangerous position, she shuddered, and turning sharply, caught hold of Prince Louis of Battenberg, closing her eyes from the dreadful sight. Nevertheless, we did our duty, and cheered lustily while the carriage passed on its way.

The committee of the exhibition had borrowed my services as director of entertainments, and one of the most successful that we had was a war spectacle, entitled "The Battle of Isandula." In this affair, which took place out of doors, we employed nearly one thousand men, military, naval, doctors, nurses, ambulance, priests, and, last but not least, savages. Captain—now Sir —R. Baden-Powell had charge of the cavalry, and over the tea-table at our house we used to arrange the various incidents, using knives, spoons, sugar-tongs, and lump sugar to denote the various units. Sometimes I visited and took tea with him at the cavalry barracks at Seaforth, when we again compared notes. It proved a great success, the receipts for the fortnight it was on being some three or four thousand pounds in excess of other weeks. B.-P. was good enough to say that I was wasting my time out of the army.

Perhaps the competitions organised by the N.P.R.S. were the most exciting of these demonstrations, especially in the contests between various towns, when the audiences sometimes became so excited that rioting seemed imminent. The items of competition consisted of drills, high jumping, and gymnastic feats; points were given for each of these items, and the winners of the highest number of aggregate marks obtained gold medals and held the national shield for one year. When Liverpool beat Manchester, the Secretary of the Y.M.C.A., who owned the gymnasium at Manchester, journeyed specially to Liverpool to give me a "bit of his mind." I was going out when he called, and as we walked together into the city, his vituperation strained language to its limits, and the vehemence of his delivery attracted the notice of the passers-by.

I endured this silently for one mile and a half, till we reached a point where we separated.

"Do you call yourself a Christian?" I asked.

"Certainly," he blurted out, with greater vehemence than ever.

"Then," said I, "if you do, I hope for the rest of my life I shall remain a sinner."

He stared at me in astonishment, and we parted.

The competitions in England, although sometimes exciting, paled into insignificance when compared to the historic meetings of Liverpool *v.* Dundee, or Dundee *v.* Aberdeen. When Liverpool visited Dundee for the first time we received a great welcome. There was a crowd of ten thousand people outside the railway station, and we were met with ringing cheers. I was carried shoulder high to the hotel and was forced to make a speech from the balcony. On our return to the railway station we were guarded by the police amidst the hootings of the populace. The reason for this change of feeling was that Liverpool had won. In nearly all subsequent visits to Dundee or Aberdeen, the English teams made their efforts amidst a storm of furious hootings and cat-calls from thousands of native sportsmen. Under these adverse circumstances I usually called upon our men to remember that they were Englishmen under "fire," and must not flinch an inch. As a matter of fact, the hooting became monotonous; we took it as a sign that our opponents had not sufficient ability in their representatives to rely on a win, and were obliged to resort to the above practice. Consequently we felt stimulated, and generally won. After all it was only a sign of enthusiasm, and we were glad to see it.

Our second visit to Dundee was not without its humorous side. The Liverpool team, with the exception of their instructor, were all good-looking

young men, and it was the practice of the Scotch evening papers to pester me for their photographs. These, owing to the apathy of the team, I had the greatest difficulty in obtaining. When, therefore, they were not forthcoming, I supplied the want from the outside stall of a second-hand bookseller. I chose them indiscriminately, paying one penny each for them, and they included such well-known figures as Rev. Henry Ward Beecher, Rev. Ira Talmage, Calcraft, Palmer the poisoner, the Emperor Francis Joseph of Austria. When the vain members of our team arrived at Dundee, they purchased the evening papers, and were astounded to see these photographs over a brief biography of themselves. They were, in fact, furious. Our "Adonis," Arthur Dodd, came to me and, pointing to the photo of the Rev. Ira Talmage, who had prominent side whiskers, said—

"What do you think of that libel? I call it a disgrace to journalism."

"He has an intellectual forehead," I observed.

"Forehead!" he said indignantly; "yes, but what about that nose, and those side whiskers?" and he twirled his own black moustache in agitated derision.

Other sufferers now came along, and I advised them to complain to the editor of the paper. They thereupon all went in a body, and interviewed Sir John Leng, who looked at them and then at his paper, and was as much puzzled as themselves.

Our humorist, C. A. Lunn, now came to me, and declared that he had overheard one of the Scotch team say to his fellows, "Offer plenty of cigars to Mr. Alexander, for he doesna' smoke."

"Now," said C. A., "we want you to take

all the cigars offered to you, and then you can distribute them to us."

During the day I received many offers of cigars, all of which I accepted, saying that I would not smoke just then, and in a short time my overcoat pocket became heavy. It was soon lightened, however, for every now and then I felt a hand dive into the pocket, and the weight became normal again.

When we retired to bed that night, for we usually travelled the day before the contest, we found to our annoyance that our hotel overlooked a railway siding, and none of us succeeded in getting any sleep. Our team were quite positive that our opponents had arranged this manœuvre, and, as a matter of fact, our men, tired with travelling and a sleepless night, lost the competition. We were escorted back to the railway station with cheers.

We determined to pay off this score against them, and when Dundee visited Liverpool, we informed them that we had selected a very nice hotel for them (the noisiest in the town); but they smiled superciliously, and remarked that they had already secured one. We found this to be the case, and they certainly had obtained quarters at the quietest hotel in Liverpool.

Not to be outdone, however, we engaged the services of McKenzie, the street piper, at a fee of three shillings per hour, to play popular airs outside their hotel, commencing at 12 p.m. We found it necessary to square the policeman on beat, and at midnight McKenzie, with his pipes, shook the neighbourhood with the soul-stirring strains of the bagpipes. He reported as follows—

"When all the clocks o' the toon were quiet, I just commenced wi' 'Bonny Dundee.' It's a

tune that's nae vera weel suited for the pipes, an' there was just an auccident to ane or twa o' the notes, but I played it just for half an hour, marching up and down to keep myself warm. Then the Dundee laddies, they lifted up the windee an' speered oot, an' one of them said, 'We're just obleeged to ye for your welcome, an' we wish ye guid nicht.' I waited a bit few minutes, to get my breath, and taste a drap, then I gave them the 'Flowers of Edinburgh' for another half-hour. But they didna' appreciate it, for they flung up the windee and, after making a collection, dropped me a sma' threepenny piece in a large piece of white paper, so that I couldna' miss seeing it. 'There's some siller,' they said, 'an' ye'll gang awa' hame, it's one o'clock o' the morning.' Well, I took the siller, an' my breath an' anither drappit, an' then gae them 'Killiecrankie.' Aye, now! it's a beautiful skirl, but yon laddies didna' appreeciate it at all, for they flung up the windee and threw something out at me—nae siller, but just jug-fulls o' water. But, mon! what's the good of water without whisky? so I just got into the doorway o' the office buildings, and after taking my breath and another drappit, an' waiting till the clocks o' the toon rang twa, I gae them 'The Duke o' Athol,' an' at half-past twa, I changed it to 'Macgregor's Gathering.' Then at three o' the clock, I was just taking my breath an' drappit, when the door o' the hoose opened, an' three or four braw laddies, wi' nae clathes, came shivering to the door, and looked aboot, an' as they had sticks, I just shrank back into the passage, an' they said, 'He's gane awa', the chiel's gane!' an' they closed the door behind them. Aye, mon! but it's astonishing tae find sich a want o' appreeciation o' the national

music by one's ane countrymen. So I waited just a bit o' minutes, and played the lament 'Lochaber nae Mair,' and marched hame. A busybody policeman stopped me, but he was a Scotchman, an' when I told him I had been serenading the Dundee laddies, he was verra pleased."

We congratulated McKenzie, paid him his fee, and won our competition.

These small incidents only tended to make these contests more interesting, and whenever we visited Dundee we received from the more responsible citizens considerable hospitality. Mr. Bell, of Belmont, was conspicuous for the generous welcome he gave to his visitors.

He had a nice house on the banks of the Tay, and I attended a bachelors' dinner there one evening. The dining-hall had a music gallery at one end, and the furniture was appropriately antique. When the whisky was on, tongues became loosened, stories were related, and the laughter was loud.

One man related how Mistress Carmichael had cheated the Elder at the Presbyterian church.

"When you see her coming," said Thompson to Dalgetty, "don't let her pass the box, she has plenty o' siller!"

Accordingly, when Mistress Carmichael appeared at the vestibule, Dalgetty thrust the collecting box under her nose; but she replied with dignity, "I'll be here this evening," and marched in. Dalgetty told Thompson of the incident, and cautioned him to look after her in the evening, and when Thompson, who had charge of the evening box, saw Mistress Carmichael approach, he respectfully presented the box for her donation.

"I was here this morning," she said with scorn, and again marched in.

Another story told was how a certain Scot used to place an I.O.U. for one shilling in the collecting box, and take out sixpence change.

Another related to a honeymoon affair. A certain McTavish had taken unto himself a new wife, and had held out to her as an inducement a honeymoon in London. When McTavish, with a small portmanteau, and his wife with a huge trunk, appeared at the railway station, the booking clerk insisted on charging excess luggage. They tried to shake his resolution, but he was inexorable. Whereupon McTavish said—

"Weel, Jean, ye'll just have tae gang awa' hame until they alter the regulations, and I'll just gang alane; it will save the siller, and I will tell ye all aboot it when I come hame."

Everybody in the room laughed with the exception of a man who sat opposite Mr. Bell and myself, and who, during the recital of these and similar stories looked very solemn, and even sad; but even he, after a time, when everybody else was serious, commenced to smile. It seemed a struggle for him to preserve his composure, and his features twisted with antagonistic emotions.

"He has just seen one of the jokes," whispered Mr. Bell to me. Then aloud he said, "What's amusing you, Robert?"

Robert broke out into a pungent laugh. "That's just it," he said; "I'm laughing at something I heard twa days ago, but I canna remember what it was."

On a subsequent occasion, and after a long and tiring journey from the South, I arrived to transact a little business at Dundee. What a curious place it is with its shops, buildings, and

houses all made of the same grey sad-looking masonry; with its kirk containing three different sects of worshippers; with its street corners where knots of men gossiped and looked hard at every stranger! I stopped at a very staid temperance hotel, situated in a melancholy pile of buildings, and kept by a very serious Baillie. He looked at me solemnly, and cross-examined me as to my identity, for I had made a hurried visit, and had very little luggage. He was only half satisfied by my reticence, and consigned me to a somewhat cheerless apartment where linoleum and bare furniture reigned supreme.

Then a sober Scotch lass came in and laid the table for my meal, in which scones, brown bread, oatcake, and marmalade predominated. I was halfway through this when the Baillie entered the room quickly, and announced in an excited manner, "My Laird Kinnaird." Short, squarely built, brawny, red-haired and red-bearded, with a look of an old footballer about him, Lord Kinnaird entered. Shaking hands, with a kindly smile in his blue "een," he glanced critically round the room.

"I heard you were here," he said. "What do you think of Dundee?"

"Very Scotch," I answered guardedly.

"What do you mean?" he asked, with a short laugh.

"Not much colour about, everything is grey, buildings heavy and gloomy, shops uninviting, the people sad—and why do they gather together in knots at the end of each street? They look as though they meditated another '45 rising."

"You are located in a very quiet part of the town, but you must come out to Rossie."

On the following day I visited Rossie Priory,

Lord Kinnaird's ancestral home, a noble pile of buildings on the slopes of the Perthshire hills, with the River Tay at their foot.

The entrance hall was that of a typical Highland home—a broad staircase, numerous curtained passages in various directions, implements of war and hunting trophies on the walls, and brawny Highlanders lounging around a huge fireplace. At the front of this a peculiar hearth-rug was laid, upon which a row of savage-looking, grinning animals were crouched as though about to spring upon any intruder.

"What beasties are those?" I inquired of Lord Kinnaird.

"I think they are wolves," he replied, "but where they came from I cannot say. They were here in my grandfather's time, and probably for generations before that."

There were only members of the family present at dinner—Lady Kinnaird, the Hon. Emily Kinnaird, and Lord Kinnaird's two sons, the Hon. Douglas and Kenneth.

On its conclusion, I was prevailed upon by the younger members of the family to visit a lumber room which was supposed to be haunted. Accordingly we made our way up the great staircase and along various corridors until we reached a remote wing of the house. Here, somewhat hesitatingly, we entered a large bare room, where we improvised a game of ball. While in the excitement of this we heard a low, moaning sound. On hearing it, my companions at once fled, leaving me alone with the supposed ghost. It did not, however, make its appearance, so I leisurely made my way downstairs, finding some difficulty owing to the intricacy of the passages. Lord Kinnaird, who was waiting for me, said he wanted to show me the chapel.

We were preceded by the steward, an old man who carried a huge bunch of keys. We passed through a long corridor, which was filled with beautiful stained-glass windows, each window having been placed there by a former head of the family. I was particularly struck with the head of a Madonna which appeared in one of them. Lord Kinnaird, too, expressed his admiration, whereupon the old steward remarked—

"Does your Lordship ken the story o' the window?"

Receiving a negative reply the old man told us the following incident —

"For generations each Kinnaird has vied with the other to place in these niches a beautiful window, and when it came to the turn of the fifth lord, he determined he would outdo all the others by his selection. So he set sail for Holland, and after much wandering, purchased from a rich abbot the Madonna window. This in due time arrived, and was fixed in its place; but some time afterwards a great English artist visited here, and he declared that it was just a painted copy and nothing else. The laird was much enraged at the trick that had been played upon him, and that very night set sail with fifty of his chiels. He found the holy abbot in bed, but he made him get up, and, bringing him to the rightful window, beat him for his treachery. Then the laird had the window cut out, and brought it safely home with him; not only did he bring the window, but he brought the siller which he paid for it also."

Lord Kinnaird laughed. "I never heard that story before," he remarked; "but come and see our burial-place."

We went through a side door into the open air, and passing through a thicket, came to a

real Highland burn, purling and murmuring as it splashed along. Proceeding along its banks, Lord Kinnaird pointed out some of the scenes of his boyish escapades. He also pointed out a small cottage.

"That cottage," he remarked, "is of great interest to our family, for it was here that my grandfather concealed Richard Brinsley Sheridan from his creditors."

We now came to a ruined chapel, roofless and bereft of windows. The floor was covered with tombs, upon each of which was placed a recumbent marble effigy.

"It is the custom for the heads of our house," said his lordship, "to have a statue prepared in the lifetime, and when their turn comes, it is laid on their tomb."

"I hope it will be many years before your time arrives," I remarked with sincerity; and Lord Kinnaird is at the present time one of the most useful, as well as one of the most philanthropic, of our peers.

## CHAPTER XXII

### FÊTE AT HAWARDEN PARK

HAWARDEN PARK for many years was the Mecca of political devotees who came to see Mr. Gladstone. Lancashire towns in particular organised their annual excursions to Hawarden with a view not only of seeing Mr. Gladstone, but also of shaking hands with him. This latter was a severe test to the aged statesman, and I suggested that it ought to be done by proxy. This was afterwards undertaken by one of the members of the Gladstone family.

Taking advantage of the excursions, a great *fête* was organised at Hawarden Park, with a view of raising funds for the erection of a Young Men's Institute in the village. I superintended the entertainments. These consisted, in addition to bands, sports, etc., of many side shows, the largest of which was the attraction of the "Electric Lady," who by a wave of the hand, as it were, made strong men weak and weak men strong. I met Mr. H. J. Gladstone on one of the afternoons. His face wore a troubled expression, and in answer to my inquiry, he said that the large tent was filled with people, but that the "Electric Lady" had, after receiving her salary, decamped.

I told him I would put it all right, and going to the committee tent I secured the services of half a dozen stalwart villagers; to these I

explained the situation. I then told them to scatter themselves in the audience, and when I called upon people to come and assist me on the stage in my new *rôle* of "Electric Lady," they were to come up, and if I told them to lift any object up they were to hold it down, or if I commanded them to hold it down, they were to lift it up. We then hurried to the tent. I appeared on the stage before the impatient audience, and told them that I regretted to inform them that the "Electric Lady," after having received her salary, had decamped; but as I also possessed the electric "gift" I would, with their permission, endeavour to perform the same feats that the lady had done.

I then retired, and having hastily put on borrowed feminine plumes, reappeared. I at once called out for some assistants from the audience, and after some apparent hesitation, my burly confederates came on the stage. The first part of the entertainment was genuine, and consisted of my pushing big men about with my little finger, the secret being to place the subject in such an attitude of resistance that his muscles were "out of gear" and his body off the balance; of course I had to make certain mysterious passes and waves of the hand to put the electric influence on the subject; finally a chair was brought on the stage, which I invited them to lift above their heads.

The six men seized hold of the chair, but after I had placed the "electric influence" on them, they could not budge it an inch. When I took the electric influence away, they raised the chair up immediately, but when I put the influence on them again, they could not bring it down; when I removed the influence, down came the chair. The villagers performed more

than their share of the deception by the facial grimaces and physical contortions with which they struggled against the electric influence placed upon them. The audience were delighted.

During the latter part of the *séance*, Mr. H. Gladstone came in, and appeared astonished at the new electric lady. I do not think, however, that I ever gave our secret away to him.

When the Institute was erected, I was invited to open it with one of my lectures, and this I did. All the members of the Gladstone family, including Mr. Gladstone, were present.

Mr. Gladstone was accompanied by some visitors from the castle; amongst others, I recognised Sir Algernon West and the Rev. Scott Holland. Mr. Gladstone had a couple of bright boys with him, Lord Dalmeny and the Hon. Neil Primrose, sons of Lord Rosebery, and who took a great interest in the proceedings.

I had felt a keen desire to give Mr. Gladstone some pleasure on this occasion, and had finally decided to give him some music. There was a famous boy singer, Master Steele, at the Liverpool Cathedral at this time, and I brought him with me. When I came to the part of my lecture in which I spoke of the throat and neck muscles, I asked my young friend to illustrate my meaning with some singing. The little chorister then sang in beautiful style "Angels ever Bright and Fair." Mr. Gladstone looked immensely pleased, and the audience were taken by storm. He then sang, in answer to a clamorous encore, "The Better Land."

I had ascertained from the Rev. Harry Drew that these were two of Mr. Gladstone's favourite songs, and I am glad to think that they gave him some pleasure.

When I was performing my sword feats, he

heckled me as was usual with him, and I was at my wits' end to explain the physiology of the movements. In one of my feats I used to invite one of the audience to come forward and kneel down. After placing an apple upon the back of his neck, I would, with a downward stroke of the sword, cut the apple in two halves, without, of course, injuring the neck of the kneeling figure. But there are necks and necks; if the neck is perfectly round, like a sausage, the apple at the slightest twitch might roll off, and awkward results might follow. On the other hand, if the neck is flat at the back, the apple would be secure.

On this particular occasion, when I invited a man from the audience to come forward, a man approached with a bottle-shaped neck; I whispered to him that his neck was rather round for my purpose, and he went away, apparently considerably relieved. I then called for another volunteer to come forward. Mr. Gladstone instantly got up, "Would Mr. Alexander explain why he had refused the first volunteer?"

After a pause I replied significantly, "Married man!" Mr. Gladstone and the audience seemed to enjoy this small joke immensely.

Fortunately the second volunteer had a flat neck, and I performed the feat safely, handing the halves of the apple to Mr. Gladstone for inspection. He again got up. "Would I explain to the audience how I performed this feat." This was a poser to me, as I had never considered the physiology of the movement. However, I told him the simple truth, viz. to place an apple upon the back of the neck, then make one downward cut with the sword, and when the edge of the latter reached the neck, stop immediately. This caused Mr. Gladstone much amusement. At the conclusion of the lecture a beautiful

framed proof engraving of Millais' Gladstone portrait, with Mr. Gladstone's autograph attached, was presented to me. Mr. Gladstone spoke very kindly to me, as was his wont.

I told him that Bishop Ryle, of Liverpool, had called upon me on the previous day, and learning that I was to visit Hawarden, had raised his hands above his head, then bending with stiff knees to the ground, had tied his shoelace.

"Ask Mr. Gladstone if he can do that?" said he.

"What age is the Bishop?" asked Mr. Gladstone.

"Seventy-five," I replied.

"When he arrives at my age," returned Mr. Gladstone, "I will compete with him."

He also thanked me very sincerely for bringing up the youthful chorister, whose beautiful singing, he said, had given him considerable pleasure.

Mr. Gladstone was now getting too old for tree-cutting, and I devised some exercises for him with a pulley apparatus which we erected in his dressing-room.

I now received invitations from the French Government and our own Colonies, to visit and assist them in their physical training organisation, but could not obtain the necessary leave of absence from my committee. I also received the following letter from the American Government:—

"Bureau of Education,
"Washington, U.S.A.
"May 3rd, 1893.

"DEAR SIR,

"In recognition of the eminent services rendered by you in the cause of physical education, in which the United States has largely participated, your name has been placed upon the list of vice-presidents of the International

Council of Education, and I should be glad to know if you would accept the post of adjudicator in the various international contests which will take place this year at the Chicago Exhibition, particulars of which I enclose.

"I am, dear sir,

"Your obedient servant,

"W. D. HARRIS,

"Commissioner of Education.

"A. Alexander, F.R.G.S."

This offer I was also reluctantly obliged to decline, but I had some correspondence with the above authorities mentioned, and hope I was of some service to them.

I now organised for the Greek Colony at Liverpool a revival of Greek games, a representation of which took place after some preparation at the Liverpool Gymnasium before the entire Greek community, who are largely represented at Liverpool. The athletes were chosen from the best-developed men I could obtain. They were dressed in ancient Greek costumes, or rather imitations of them, and when the limelight was thrown upon them, the effect was very striking, and created much enthusiasm. Amongst the items presented were—

"Throwing the Disc."

"Hurling the Javelin."

"Throwing the Spear."

"Greek Wrestling and Boxing."

"Chariot Racing," etc.

After the games proper were over, the athletes were mustered into one large phalanx, and went through a series of statuesque movements, concluding each series of movements by striking and remaining in the pose of typical Greek statuary. Everything was performed to the

musical accompaniment of the Greek National Hymn, a solemn and plaintive air, which I was informed had been in use in Greece with slight variations from the time of Alexander the Great, to whom it was dedicated.

In the concluding portion of this massed demonstration, the gladiators fought with each other in pairs, one in each pair being placed *hors de combat*. The victorious gladiators, after a slight pause, then stooped simultaneously, and picking up their fallen foe, marched solemnly off, to the weird and stately Greek music, the limelight showing their fine muscular development effectually. The whole was a very great success.

I was afterwards presented by the Greeks of Liverpool with an original silver Greek coin of great antiquity. On one side it bears in bas-relief the head of Alexander the Great, and on the reverse side the figure of Jupiter sitting in judgment. The coin, which was enclosed in a glass locket, was presented by Mr. Barff, the Greek consul, who remarked that the coin in its time had probably purchased many a Greek slave.

I fear the Greek nation has now very little typical physique remaining, in spite of its traditions of former physical greatness, for with very few exceptions I have found them, as far as physical training is concerned, an apathetic and indolent people. Greek children are exceedingly pretty, but they seldom retain this beauty in adult years, as through want of physical activity they soon relapse into much flesh and torpidity of movement.

## CHAPTER XXIII

### A CAVE ADVENTURE

THE question of holidays is often a perplexing one, especially to any one, like myself, of moderate means. Everybody seems to have different tastes, but in this particular year I had arranged to meet my old friends at the wayside railway station of St. Columb in North Cornwall, and thence drive, if we could obtain a vehicle, to a lonely hamlet called Trevarrion on the coast.

Mrs. A. and myself met our fellow-conspirators as appointed, and were conveyed with our luggage in an agricultural cart without springs, to our destination some seven or eight miles away. We had already had a long weary journey, and this last lap in this primitive chariot rather tried our tempers. We bombarded the driver, a stolid old Cornishman, with questions relating to the scenery at Trevarrion, but could only obtain from him particulars of certain livestock, from chickens to pigs, of whose pedigree he seemed to have an intimate knowledge.

When at last we arrived at the hamlet, the air was so pungent with the odour of wild garlic that our pessimist, G. C., wanted to rechristen the place "Stinkamalee." He was overruled, and our equipage brought us to the only substantial house that we could see. This appeared to be a stone hunting-lodge, built in the shelter of a cliff at the back of which we could hear the

roaring sea. There was a tiny lawn at the front, with some semblance of order, but everything else within ocular vision appeared to be wild and chaotic. Mr. and Mrs. P. with Mrs. A. and myself took possession of this habitation, and after arranging to have our combined meals there, the cart with the remainder of our party went off, dropping its passengers at various havens of rest, consisting for the most part of lonely fishermen's cottages in sheltered nooks of wild moorland.

When we assembled at the tea-table, some rather ghastly reports were made of the various lodgings. We all agreed, however, to give the place a trial, and as the roaring of the sea became louder and louder, we climbed the cliff at the back of our house, and after proceeding a few yards came upon a spectacle which, old travellers as we were, fairly took our breath away. The cliffs, steep and precipitous, seemed to range from about three hundred feet to one thousand feet in height; down below the shore was strewn with immense boulders, over which the tempestuous sea was breaking with great violence, making thunderous claps of sound, and sending the spray, high as we were, over our heads. Beyond, the waves advanced in long serried lines like regiments of Tritons advancing on a frontal attack. On they came, regiment after regiment, not with white foam, but with their crested heads crowned with deep-churned, cream-coloured waters. Booming sounds, created by furious attacks of water against the opening mouths of caverns, came from right and left. Above us there was a solitary speck in the blue sky. We were puzzled as to its identity, when suddenly the kestrel swooped down like a stone, and caught its quarry on the face of the cliff. Scattered companies of

wild sea-birds screamed with discordant noises, tossing and gyrating over the stormy waters.

We all agreed that we had never seen such a wild scene of nature. Our youthful members wanted to explore, but the darkening shadows made this imprudent, and we resolved to postpone our curiosity until the morning. The North Cornish coast is not a suitable holiday ground for children. The cliffs are excessively dangerous, and there is not a vestige of a fence to prevent any one toppling over a thousand feet below. There are other death traps too.

On the following morning, stimulated by the bracing atmosphere, and being challenged by E. S., our optimist, I essayed a running high jump over a small hedge, about four feet high; but thinking there might possibly be a puddle at the other side, I pulled up, to "look before I leaped," and discovered the unprotected mouth of an extinct tin-mine. I threw a stone down, and judging from the time it took travelling to the bottom, it must have been a couple of thousand feet deep.

After escaping from this I had another rude shock. We all went down to the shore to bathe. The waves were still terribly rough, but we were told that there was a safe pool around a certain bend in the cliff. On account of the high tide we found it difficult to get around the bend. This was managed by a series of dashes, but when, last of all, my turn came, I found it impossible to get past without being drenched. I therefore determined to undress and get there. Sitting on a large boulder, I undressed, but before I had time to stand up, a voluminous backwash came, lifting me off the boulder, and taking me out to sea. As soon as I could I regained the shore, and made a run for it, but was met by another

backwash, and once more taken out into the briny ocean.

I was now in deep water, and turning on to my back, commenced to think what was best for me to do. Having made up my mind, I utilised the incoming waves by a series of big strokes, and when I was landed unceremoniously on to the shore, I ran for a small boulder, and getting to the land side of it, pressed my back against it. When the backwash came, it completely covered the boulder and myself with its rush of waters, and also cut me rather badly with chafing me on to the jagged granite. As soon as the retreating waves passed, however, I made another sprint towards the cliffs; but seeing the backwash coming again, I once more pressed my back against another boulder. After more washings of this kind, I ultimately found refuge on the face of the cliff, up which I hastily scrambled.

My next job was to find my clothes, which caused me some trouble. They were, of course, drenched, and as I was covered with blood from various lacerations, I must have resembled a battle-stained warrior. In the meantime I could hear the merry laughter of the bathers in their safe bathing pool, but as I could not reach them, I partially dressed, and hurrying back to the lodgings, doctored myself up. I was never more impressed with the futility of human strength when opposed to the forces of nature than I was on this occasion.

We bathed every morning, played cricket in the afternoons, strolled in the evenings, or if the weather was bad, remained indoors, and debated on all manner of subjects. One afternoon we were playing cricket when we were startled by the sound of a new feminine voice, and more so by the appearance of the owner. Part of her

was fashionably dressed, and the other portion most unfashionable. The voice said—

"Will one of you gentlemen come here?"

We despatched the optimist, he possessing amongst other gifts, that of being a ladies' man. He stayed an intolerably long time with the lady, delaying our game considerably. When he did come he wanted to explain, but we postponed that until dinner time, and proceeded with our cricket. After dinner, E. S. explained that the lady was the vicar's wife, belonging to a different parish, and she, having heard of our diversions, wanted to know if we would give a concert in aid of something, and further, she had brought a challenge from the St. Columb cricket club, to play them a match.

This created excitement, and it was laid on the table that evening for discussion. We first took up the subject of the concert, when all those who could sing hesitated, and all those who could not sing hastened to offer their services. As a matter of fact, Mrs. A. was our only singer. She was the thrush and we were the sparrows. Nevertheless, we thought we might give some kind of miscellaneous entertainment, and decided to try.

The cricket match was a more serious matter. It transpired that I was the only one that had previously played in a match. All of us, however, were athletic, and as the optimist observed, capable of great things. We did not heed G. C. our pessimist's exclamation of "Rot!" but went into the matter with enthusiasm. Our company had been reinforced by two pupils, R. M. from Bournemouth, and H. S. from Dublin, but even these only made up seven. We were obliged, therefore, to enlist the services of four sturdy locals, who, however, had never handled a cricket bat in their lives before. Having made

up our team, we accepted the challenge, modestly describing ourselves as a moderate cricket team. When, however, we reached the little town of St. Columb, we found ourselves billed as the M.C.C., which elated our optimist and disgusted the pessimist. There was a large crowd of spectators present, and the field looked very gay with its bunting and refreshment tents.

We tossed, and went in to bat. As the pessimist had hinted darkly at his powers as a bat, we sent him in first, and as became a member of the M.C.C. he made much business over the pitch, patting down imaginary impediments, centring with the bowler, and then looking mysteriously at the various boundaries. Seeing this, the rival captain ordered his men out into the long field. The pessimist was at last ready. The bowler ran, the ball came, the wickets went down, and the pessimist retired to the refreshment tent. I did not fare much better. I sent the first ball cautiously away for a single, the next for a boundary, and the third I skied for a lofty boundary. It went into the direction of the refreshment tent. Our melancholy pessimist, seeing the ball approach, could not resist exhibiting his prowess as a fielder, and walking a few yards forward, he caught the ball and solemnly handed it to the perspiring long field, who had nearly broken his neck running in a game attempt to bring off a brilliant catch. He was not pleased, and looked curses if he did not articulate them. The umpire then came forward, and declaring that it was an infringement of the rules, I was given out.

The optimist made seven. Mr. P. and R. N., owing to an altercation with R. N. in the middle of the pitch, was stumped after making two. Three more made singles, three of the locals

annihilated their own wickets, and we were all out for seventeen.

When we returned to the refreshment tent, the pessimist explained his failure gloomily. The rival team, aglow with excitement, now went in to bat, and the excitement went higher when I sent them back one after another, until when the ninth man retired, the total had only reached sixteen, all clean bowled. The village blacksmith was the last man in, and stepping out to one of my deliveries, he sent it, amidst tremendous applause, skywards. The ball had gone in the direction of the afternoon sun, and then, curving in its downward flight, went into the direction of H. S., who was at "long field." We implored the man from Dublin to catch the ball, and he made a gallant attempt, opening his hands very wide with that object in view; but the afternoon sun did the mischief, for the ball slipped through his hands, striking him violently in the pit of the stomach, and he collapsed, writhing in pain. We implored him to hold the ball—not to let it touch the ground and become dead, but he only moaned, taking no notice of our appeals.

In the meantime the village doctor, who acted as umpire, walked up majestically, to see if the ball had been caught, or was dead, and also to have a look at the fallen foe. The ball had meanwhile ensconced itself inside the disarranged cricket shirt of our fielder, and we all waited patiently until, in answer to our vehement appeals, he once more handled the ball, with which proceeding the umpire professed himself satisfied, and declared it a fair catch. There was much jubilation in the ranks of the M.C.C., and corresponding depression on the other side, a depression which was not lessened when, in their next venture, I took ten wickets for thirteen runs.

I gave our pessimist another chance, and going in first with E. S. he certainly looked business; but his luck was against him, for, after his usual preliminaries, he came out to a Yorker. The optimist this time increased his score to nine. As he only required four to win, I sent in Mr. P. and R. N. But they were again unfortunate, for in their first run, and after much hesitation, they collided in the middle of the pitch, and were run out. E. A. and H. S., however, made the required runs, and we scored. Our first novel victory! Mrs. Perrin, the vicar's wife, now approached us, and regretted that we had won so quickly, as it had spoilt all her arrangements for tea, etc. Could not we have another match, and let St. Columb win? she asked. We had another match, which ended in a draw.

After tea we repaired to the schoolroom, where we had promised to give an evening entertainment. I discovered in the possession of an old inhabitant an ancient sword, which I borrowed and had sharpened. The entertainment commenced with some physical drill. R. M. then essayed a tenor solo; he could not sing, but at the critical moment we all joined in chorus, and saved the situation. Mr. Payne gave an action recitation of the "Burial of Sir John Moore." He had a grave marked on the platform, and lighted candles placed around it. Then, with lights lowered, he gave a very realistic recital of the burial. I horrified the people with my sword feats, and caused the vicar's wife to scream, when I suggested that she should allow me to cut an apple on the back of her neck.

Mrs. A. gave some charming Irish melodies, but the event of the evening was the "Bounding Arabs of Sahara;" we had transformed the schoolmaster's desk into a vaulting horse, and

had utilised the blackboard as a spring-board, and over the desk of authority we frog-leaped, dived into space, pirouetted and turned somersaults, in a manner that caused considerable astonishment. Needless to say, we received many invitations to repeat this performance in various parts of Cornwall, and several church organs and christening fonts benefited from our help.

We visited many caves on the coast, got caught in one by the tide, and just managed to save our lives through a side entrance into open water, drenching ourselves in the mishap.

On another occasion our pessimist friend bathed in the ebb instead of the flood tide, and could not reach the shore. He called lustily for help. This ended in a dramatic rescue in which my brother Edward, who was our champion swimmer, was principally concerned.

On one night we ventured to the shore while a sea mist was on. It was a most singular phenomenon. Columns of mist like connected and disconnected bodies of eerie spirits came threateningly upon us, resolving into space on contact. Everything was shrouded in supernatural phantastic forms of misty grey; unseen nocturnal birds shrieked overhead. When we groped our way to the bathing pool, the surface, some distance below, was a sheet of glassy phosphorus. Surrounded by misty spectres, with a darkened sky overhead, it presented a ghoulish uncanny appearance. The waters of Lethe, or the pool of departed spirits, rose to our imagination, and we shivered.

Into this appalling conglomeration of silent water and gloomy superstition my brother insisted upon diving. He threw off his flannels; we saw a vapourish, ghostlike figure passing through the mist. Down it went into the semi-darkness.

When it touched the glassy mirror, the surface broke into countless fragments of phosphorescent luminosity. It pierced the waters, leaving behind it many turbulent, uneasy reflections. We waited for some moments in suspense, then in a different part of the pool it reappeared, but a more startling figure it would be difficult to conceive. As much of the body as could be seen was apparently clothed in a luminous winding sheet, as though it were a spirit trying to break loose from the thraldom of death or the lower regions of Hades itself. I do not wonder at the superstition of the Cornish folk, and had they come upon the apparition that we now saw, they would have had strange stories to tell. Nor did the figure, when it emerged from the water, improve on ocular vision; it was still in the shroud of its watery grave, and drops of phosphorus fell from it like imps of restless spirits, asking the monster to return to its home in the depths.

None of us thanked him for the treat he had given us, but we all felt relieved when he rejoined us, and was duly admonished. He remarked that he had felt various things—fish, he presumed—rub against him when under water.

The mist continued on the following day. It invaded everywhere and everything. The debate in the house was becoming undignified. The ladies had evidently obtained the franchise. The atmosphere was becoming mercurial. The optimist and myself went upstairs, and divesting ourselves of every shred of clothing, put on a mackintosh, a pair of goloshes, and a cricket cap. Armed with a walking-stick we issued forth into the mist. We could not see a yard before us, but relied on our stick and hearing. We avoided the coast and went inland, we knew not whither.

It was like walking under the deep, and quite

a new experience. Then suddenly the hot sun attacked the enemy on its left flank. It made first a dogged, then a futile resistance. The sun continued to attack, splitting the mist into thousands of shapes and figures, spectral Tritons, fantastic horsemen, and all the elements of a mystic army retreating before a stronger and more valiant foe; revealing splashes of colour on the hedgerows, like the blushes of some wonderful beauty, or the happy smiles of Nature's children. We returned, and passing through a derisive throng, clothed ourselves and again issued forth to enjoy the real Cornwall.

Cornwall! with its magnificent seas; its gigantic boulders; its mysterious caverns; its titanic cliffs and its wonderful hedges; with its thousand scents, and above all its stimulating air, giving back to all who drink of it the elixir of youth.

## CHAPTER XXIV

### TALKS WITH ROYALTIES

One of the greatest pleasures of my life has been my acquaintance, perhaps I may venture to call it friendship, with Lord Charles Beresford, for no one, no matter what humble position he occupies, who has had frequent business or friendly relations with Lord Charles, can doubt that he has met a real man, of whom all Britishers are genuinely proud.

I have much reason to be so, for is he not the god-father of our son, who bears his name? and did not his famous bulldog bear my name? Since that time he has proved loyal, as he always does, to the humblest of his friends. Years ago I overheard Mr. H. J. Gladstone and Lord Kinnaird remark—

"We had better send down Mr. Alexander to Chatham to see Lord Charles, and ask him for a subscription for the National Physical Recreation Society. It will be better than writing."

Then seeing me, they asked if I would go. I consented, and went. I had some trouble to find him, but ultimately ran him to earth in an old hulk where he was administering justice to recalcitrant and over-exuberant Jack Tars. He greeted me cordially, and I was given a seat on the "Bench." There was a long queue of "sinners," but it was a marvel to see how the quick, alert mind of Lord Charles Beresford took in the

situation, and pronounced sentence. The culprits would be interrupted in the middle of a long harangue and receive their two, three, or six days' "hard," retiring with a salute, and when their backs were turned, a typical grin replacing the pious subterfuge which preceded it.

"This is dry work," said Lord Charles to me. "You had better stroll round the dockyard, and I'll finish these chaps as soon as I can, and pick you up."

I took his advice, and coming upon a huge cruiser which had been lately built, went on board, and thoroughly enjoyed myself. Then seeing an up-to-date destroyer handy, I went on board that also, examining everything in detail, and feeling very sorry for the officers and crew who had to put up with such limited accommodation. There was no one on board, and as my head and shoulders appeared above the tiny companion-way, I heard a sharp whistle, and looking in the direction, saw an officer of high rank, in resplendent uniform, and noticed that several men were hurrying towards him. He pointed at me, and the Jack Tars scampered in my direction; boarding, they placed their hands on my shoulder, and informed me that I was under arrest.

"What for?" I asked.

"Come to the Admiral," said they with a grin, "and he'll tell you."

They marched me to the Admiral, who sternly demanded my business.

When I said "Nothing," he looked fierce, and demanded my name and occupation.

I told him I was waiting for Lord Charles. He looked suspiciously at me, then sent a seaman to Lord Charles, to see if I was speaking the truth. In a couple of minutes, mounted on a vicious-looking Arab pony, which kicked out in all

directions, and gave him a clear radius of thirty feet, Lord Charles was seen approaching. When he arrived in our neighbourhood, he shouted out that it was all right, that I was a friend of his. Coming up closer, his pony quickly scattered the group, including the Admiral himself. I conversed with him on our way to his quarters at a distance of thirty feet. This pony had been presented to him by the Khedive, and was the terror of all who came near it, Lord Charles being the only exception. I was pleased to see in his sitting-room the framed photo of his godson, which I had lately sent him.

Only the members of the family were at luncheon. As the suffragette question was commencing to rear its head about this time, Lady Beresford's sister said across the table—

"Charlie, are you in favour of giving the women the vote?"

He shook his head. "No," he replied; "for the majority of them would vote for the best-looking, and not for the best man."

I told him that I had come as a deputation from Mr. H. Gladstone and Lord Kinnaird, to ask him for a subscription.

He took a cheque-book from his breast pocket, and with a fountain pen wrote me a draft for £20.

"If you want any more," he said, "come to me again."

He told me he had taken on the Chatham job to improve his technical knowledge of stores.

A Jack Tar once told me that Lord Charles was as handy as you could make 'em.

"He can make a sea-chest, or a pair of trousers, or splice a 'Turk's head' with the best of 'em, and then he comes along, and gets the bos'un to whistle us up and plays the tin whistle while

we dances the 'ornpipe. He says it's good for our innards, and maybe he's right."

Lord Charles was a good boxer. One day he told me, however, that he once had the worst of it in an encounter with a cabman, who was demanding an exorbitant fare.

"I'll fight you for it," said Lord Charles.

"All right," said the man, and he soon gave Lord Charles the worst of it. He turned out to be the ex-middleweight champion.

We had a big meeting at Liverpool on one occasion at which Lord Charles was to preside. The Lord Mayor sent his carriage to Lime Street Station to meet him, and told the coachman to bring his lordship to the Town Hall to dinner. There was a huge crowd at the station, who received him enthusiastically. I entered the carriage with him, utilising the drive with giving necessary information for the evening, then bade him farewell.

"Are you not coming in to dinner?"

"No," said I.

"That's very awkward," said Lord Charles, "as I have not obtained all the particulars I require. Why can't you come and dine here?"

"For the best of reasons," I replied, "I have not been asked."

"D—— such snobbery! Let us drive home to your place. You can give me a chop, I suppose," and in spite of all my protests, this is what he insisted on doing.

The building was very packed—as Lord Charles expressed it, "Not room for a flea."

Speaking to the audience, he told them he hated to see a man with an eye like a "poached egg."

I introduced him and Bishop Ryle, and the Rev. Herbert Ryle, now the Dean of Westminster, to each other. The Bishop and Lord

Charles were soon having a heated argument on the ethics and value of the big "D." Lord Charles insisting that it was a safety valve, and exceedingly useful in the navy, where it was so much required. The Bishop took the other view, and said it was the thin end of the wedge for obscene language. Being summoned away I cannot say how the argument ended.

About this time the Secretary of the Braemar Sports wrote asking if I would care to do something at their sports before her Majesty Queen Victoria. I was also offered by Lord de Ramsey the post of Physical Trainer to *H.M.S. Britannia* at Dartmouth, where the Royal princes, the Duke of Clarence and Prince George, were in training. I was obliged to refuse both of these flattering offers, but later on when in London I received a message from Lord Charles Beresford asking me to call upon him. I went at once and found him in company with Mr. H. J. Gladstone.

Lord Charles said, "I am going to introduce you to the Prince of Wales" (King Edward VII.) "to-day, so don't be too far away. In fact, you had better stay somewhere handy, where I can keep my eye upon you, and when I beckon you forward, just come to me."

"Oh," I said, taken aback, "it is very kind of you, but—I don't see why I should be singled out for this special honour."

"Don't you?" said he, smiling. "Well, *I* do; and Mr. Gladstone is to be presented too, so you will be in good company."

"What about dress?" I asked, with a man's dislike to changing his costume.

"Morning dress," he replied. "You will find the Prince very nice, so don't be nervous."

He left the room for a moment, and I said to Mr. Herbert Gladstone—

"This is rather a surprise to me, and as I am not accustomed to being presented to Royalty, is there any etiquette of any kind to be observed?"

"I am not used to it, either," he laughed, "but I am sure you will find the Prince like any other gentleman. If he offers to shake hands with you, of course do so. You then simply answer any questions he may put to you, and after he has finished with you, bow yourself from his presence."

This latter remark rather alarmed me, but when I reflected that I had no long train to entangle me, my spirits rose.

When the time came, there was a brilliant assemblage of people, including King Oscar of Sweden, the Duke of Clarence and many peers, bishops, and members of both Houses of Parliament.

I was standing with Lord Harris, and together we were trying to pick out the notables in the company, as there were a great number of distinguished strangers in London at the time. Then I saw Mr. Herbert Gladstone being formally introduced. The Prince was very solicitous in his inquiries after Mr. and Mrs. Gladstone. And then, having carefully noticed Mr. Gladstone's retreat, I awaited my turn.

Lord Charles's eye soon caught me, and he at once beckoned me to him. I went forward.

"This is Mr. Alexander, your Highness," said Lord Charles, introducing me.

The Prince shook hands warmly with me, not, I may remark, an aldermanic three-fingers shake, but a real English hand-shake.

"How do you do, Mr. Alexander?" he said. "I hear from Lord Charles Beresford that you have done a great work for physical training in our country."

"I have tried to do a little," I replied, "but much less than I should like to have done."

"Well, it is a very good work. I don't know of anything more patriotic than for a man to try and improve the health of his country."

"Thank you," I replied, "your words are encouraging."

"I shall be glad to hear from time to time how this work proceeds; it is, in my opinion, most useful." He then smiled, shook hands, and dismissed me.

I got safely back, and when I reflected on the incident, I came to the conclusion that a more homely good-natured Englishman I had never met than the late King Edward VII.

A little later on I was presented to the Duke and Duchess of Argyll (Princess Louise). It was my good fortune that year to be the captain of the winning team (Liverpool) who won the National Challenge Shield for gymnastics, granted by the N.P.R.S. for competition between towns. The final was held at Exeter Hall, between London and Liverpool. The Duke and Duchess appeared to take a great interest in the proceedings, and the Duke, who had grown sadly into flesh, was continually lamenting his adipose condition.

"I say, Mr. Alexander," he remarked, "can you possibly do anything with a body like mine? When I see those chaps going up that rope like monkeys, and jumping over that lath like fireflies, it makes me feel sorry that I cannot do the same."

"I could alter the shape of your body," I replied, "but I fear you must leave the rope-climbing and jumping to the younger generation."

"I wonder what makes one get into flesh so much at middle age?"

"One's enthusiasm for active exercise dwindles

about that time, and social functions usually take their place. I think that might account for your present weight, for I remember when you were a remarkably good figure."

He shook his head sadly. "One of the penalties of public life," he whispered.

The contest had proved a keen one, Liverpool being declared the victor. I accordingly ascended the platform to receive the shield on behalf of the winning team, the men following to receive their gold medals. After the introductions, the Princess eyed the large shield rather doubtfully.

"What have I to do, Mr. Alexander? It is so very heavy I cannot possibly present it to you. Wait a minute. I will call my husband."

She called the Duke and asked him to present me with the shield, as she could not lift it. He stooped, then arose laughing.

"I can't either," he said.

"If your Royal Highness," said I, "will simply touch the shield, that will be sufficient honour for us, and we will carry it off."

She smiled. "That is an easy way out of the difficulty. Well, Mr. Alexander, I have great pleasure in presenting you with this shield, and congratulate you on the skill, strength, and activity shown by your men, and also upon the splendid physique possessed by them, and wish my husband, and in fact all of our countrymen had such splendid bodies."

She touched the shield, and after thanking her, I stooped, and raising the shield above my head, marched off in triumph.

I had asked Lord Charles to try and obtain the interest of Mr. Joseph Chamberlain in the physical training movement. He tried, but failed.

"I tackled Mr. Chamberlain in the Lobby,

last night," he wrote me, "but he would not hear of it; said he had never taken exercise in his life beyond walking, and did not intend to commence at his time of life, as he never felt the need for it, and that he never felt in better health. I told him that he would feel better still if he undertook a little systematic daily exercise; but he shook his head, and said he was incorrigible."

There is little doubt that Mr. Chamberlain's life would have been prolonged, and the danger of his attack considerably lessened, if he had taken more physical exercise. Mr. Austin Chamberlain does not follow in his father's footsteps in this respect, for in his early days he indulged in many branches of sport, and was an excellent boxer.

## CHAPTER XXV

### ENGLISH ATHLETES ABROAD

TRAVELLERS who wander to the ends of the earth, must always remember their first journey abroad with special interest. When in the early nineties the Swedish Government invited me to bring to Stockholm a team of English athletes and gymnasts to compete in their great Gymnastic-festen, and also to introduce into that country our system of athletic games and sports, I felt I must make an effort to make the trip; and when I also received a request from our own Government to ascertain certain information, I made preparations for the journey.

I got together all the leading gymnasts of the day, and in addition, several well-known athletes, notably Paul Waring, who could dash off his hundred yards in 10⅗ seconds; F. W. Schofield, the N.C.C. quarter-mile champion, and an excellent all-round athlete; Arthur Dobson, the high-jumper, and several others.

The team travelled by boat from Hull to Stockholm, but I, starting earlier, travelled by Calais, Brussels, etc. Our Foreign Office had furnished me with special letters, franked by Lord Salisbury, and it was with great interest that I started on my journey. With my usual luck I found a very rough sea awaiting me at Dover; most of the passengers seemed troubled,

and I remember one Frenchman wringing his hands and uttering execrations at the bad behaviour of the Channel. As for myself, I searched for a quiet corner where, unobserved, I could make the best of it.

When we reached Calais my Gladstone bag was subjected to the usual search by an official who smoked a cigarette during the proceedings. Having recovered my property, I climbed into one of the high, omnibus-shaped carriages which was to convey me on my journey, being pestered meanwhile by many polite Frenchmen and Jews to exchange my English gold for their continental bullion. My compartment was full of passengers, and when we started, everybody appeared to confide in each other, giving their family history and future hopes at the end of their journey. Then the subject of politics was raised, and the grimaces of anger and contemptuous scorn accompanied by torrents of vituperation were very interesting to me. When the voting appeared equal, each side alternately appealed to me for moral support. I shook my head and they, with an ill-concealed look of disgust, muttered the word "Anglais," shrugging their shoulders, and recommenced all over again.

When we reached Brussels I obtained accommodation in a quiet hotel in a very narrow street. It was a quaint building with quaint windows, where, leaning out, I might almost have shaken hands with the neighbours from the windows on the opposite side of the street.

I quickly got to work with my business, in the course of which I noticed and admired the beautiful buildings, statuary and fountains that ornamented the town, and noticed with interest the assemblies of citizens who sat in evening dress at the out-of-door tables belonging to the

various cafés, apparently enjoying their coffee and conversation with great gusto.

On the following morning I stopped at the old-fashioned town of Bremen, and after gathering some information there, pushed on to Hamburg. When I arrived I hired a cab and told the driver to take me to a certain hotel. After a journey of about thirty yards, he placed my bag on the pavement, and I getting out to see what was the matter, he pointed at the name of the hotel, which was the one I had ordered him to drive me to. I gave him his fare, one mark, and went into the vestibule of the hotel. The lady clerk expressed her regret that the hotel was full, but as I had the name and address of another hotel, I withdrew, and calling another cab, asked him to drive me to it.

He took my bag, and I got in; then, after another journey of thirty yards he placed my bag on the pavement close to the station. I got out, and he pointed to the hotel, which, sure enough, bore the name where I had ordered him to drive me to. I paid him the usual fare, went into the hotel and interviewed the clerk. She expressed her regret that the hotel was full, and very kindly gave me the name and address of another hotel.

This time I was more careful in my inquiries, and ascertained that it really was about half a mile away; I drove there, and obtained the necessary accommodation.

Hamburg did not impress me very much. Its large square, however, filled with water, upon which small steamboats flitted in every direction, was very interesting, and the great and peculiar bridge beyond very imposing. After finishing my work at Hamburg, I journeyed to Copenhagen. I stayed at the Koening Wilhelm. The waiter

who attended on me had for many years occupied a similar position in London, and seemed very keen on getting back to the only place where, he said, there was any money.

After an interesting short stay at Copenhagen I proceeded to Elsinore, and wandered over the little town, filling my imagination with all the incidents in Shakespeare's "Hamlet;" then across the water to Helsingborg, and on to Malmö, an old-fashioned city on the northern banks of the Baltic. From here I had a very long railway journey along the margins of lakes and through the pine forests of Sweden until I reached Stockholm.

On our way through these Scandinavian forests I had been told to look out for wolves and bears, but I saw nothing of them. We stopped at a very lonely hut for refreshments. It was built on high piles, and just as I was wondering how we were to get into the building, a drawbridge was lowered, and we entered after the manner of the "beasties" going into the ark.

After replenishing ourselves with good coffee, stale bread, and tough meat, we passed out. A man standing at the door with a large wash-hand basin, received our contributions of one mark each.

When we restarted, I offered the guard of our train a mark for some slight service he had given me; but he refused it, and I place this on record as being the only case within my knowledge where a railway guard refused a tip.

After a weary journey I was met at Stockholm by some Swedish officials, the Aldershot gymnastic staff, and my own men. All seemed pleased to see me; I certainly was pleased to see them. I was taken to our quarters at the Grand Hotel.

Stockholm is built on several small islands, and

consequently has more waterways than streets, and if you want to go anywhere, you generally hire a small steamboat in lieu of a taxi. Our hotel faced a very large square of water. Opposite to us was the Palace, a large brick building, and to the right a very active waterfall, which supplied, at a minimum cost, electric light to the city.

On the following morning I was stopped in the street by a very respectable-looking man who asked me for assistance, his plea being that he had once been in London. I gave him something, and received many military salutes.

We met King Oscar riding on horseback two or three times during the morning, and were surprised to see that no one saluted him. When we did so, he appeared gratified, and returned our salute.

The men and women that we met had a very upright carriage, in fact it amounted to unnatural stiffness, and when they hailed each other, they appeared to be under the necessity of walking around, after the manner of the alligator, to face each other. The men lacked litheness and the women supple grace. The finest-looking man that I saw in Stockholm was King Oscar himself; I think he stood about six feet three, and had a very charming manner to strangers. The Swedes did not seem to possess much admiration for Royalty, for when I asked them for some particulars of the King, they shrugged their shoulders; and again, when I asked similar questions respecting the Crown Prince (King Gustavus) they replied with a smile, that he was a good tennis player.

There appeared to be a strong enmity between the Norwegians and Swedes, the former declaring that the latter were an artificial, effeminate race, and that they would separate from them at the

first opportunity (since accomplished). On the first day of the Gymnastic-festen, which took place in the open air, there were about one hundred thousand people present, the competitors from various parts of Europe also numbering some thousands.

The King and Court had a dais erected for them in the grand stand, and I was placed immediately behind His Majesty in order to give him what particulars I could of the English games and athletic sports, in which he seemed to take an interest, and which were, in fact, the novelty of the festival. It was an inspiring sight: the huge concourse of spectators; military bands everywhere; the gay colours of the athletes; the party cries of their followers; the sun flashing on the national flags, the bright uniforms of troops, the gay dresses of the ladies, with their curious hair adornments, all contributing to make up a never to be forgotten scene.

The first item in which the British competed was the 100 yards, or, as it was termed on the programme, "the run short." Picture to yourself a series of stringed courses, not for six or eight competitors, as is usual in English sports, but accommodation for at least one hundred runners from every part of Europe; stiff Swedes, students from Upsala, lithe Norwegians, muscular Germans, square-built Russians, stolid Finns, French, Spaniards, Italians, Greeks, all followed to the starting-post with exciting cries from their compatriots. What picturesque attitudes the athletes threw themselves into before starting! all typical of some athletic god or statue of their imagination. Most of them adopted the pose of the fighting gladiator, and I smiled when I contemplated how many seconds it would take to unravel themselves from these positions and get into the stride of the sprinter.

Then came a breathless silence, a pistol shot was fired, and the phalanx of athletes rushed to their goal. The air was filled with fervid cries in almost every conceivable language, calling upon their representative to win. The athletes maintained their solid formation for twenty-five yards—fifty yards—seventy-five yards—then out of this mass of humanity, like an arrow from a long-bow, there darted a figure, swift and solitary, like a bolt from the blue. Everybody claimed him as their representative. "Stockholm!" "Upsala!" "Leipsic!" and other shouts, roared one upon another; but—I had recognised the figure, had seen the Union Jack on the back of the runner. As he broke the tape yards ahead of his rivals, the King turned to me in perplexity.

"Englander, your Majesty," I replied quietly.

He congratulated me, and Paul Waring, amid wild acclamations came forward to receive his cup at the hands of the King. I felt proud of him, proud of my country, and Paul's uncle, of furniture fame, would probably have felt the same pride at his nephew's success.

Then followed quickly other triumphs, in the hurdles, splendidly won by F. W. Schofield. "Wide Jumping," "Putting the Shot," "Pole Jumping," etc., all won by "Englanders."

The King and Crown Prince took a special interest in the high jumping, and went on to the course to raise the lath when required. Here came the first hitch. Each competitor seemed to carry with him a small incline spring-board, which it appeared was permitted by the rules. Our men objected and I protested, but we were overruled. "In Rome do as Rome does" was their argument. As a compromise, I suggested that all the spring-board jumpers should finish their trials and have their heights recorded, and

our men would then jump from the level and have their heights recorded also. This was agreed to, and as the spring-boardians only managed to clear five feet six inches, we "Englanders" smiled. Then the spring-boards were taken away, and our two competitors rapidly cleared four feet six inches, five feet, five feet three, five feet six——

"Can they jump higher?" asked the King.

"I think so, your Majesty," I replied.

P. Cookson cleared five feet eight and a half inches, being exactly one inch above his own height. Then came one of the most exciting incidents of the festival. Arthur Dobson of Liverpool, our champion jumper, who only stood five feet four and a half inches high, was seen approaching up the run in his slow, measured, panther style; then in the last few yards, and crouching like a wild cat, he sprang into the air like a ball, and amidst wonders of surprise, cleared the same height. The applause was deafening. The King and Crown Prince patted him on the shoulder. The British Ambassador got excited and waved his hat. I whispered in his ear, "Another win for old England, Arthur." But Cookson was not to be denied, and rushed at five feet nine like a hurricane, but could not clear it. Arthur Dobson, however, sailed over it, and when at last he actually cleared five feet ten and a half inches, or six inches above his own height, he received such an outburst of wild cheering that has seldom been accorded to any individual from so large a concourse of people.

In the evening the foreign teams were entertained to dinner at the Grand Hotel, the King presiding. After dinner toasts were drunk and speeches made, the band playing the various national anthems. Being the winning team, the King proposed the health of the "Englanders,"

declaring that we were a wonderful nation, and that he had happy memories of his visit to London. I, mounting a chair, replied, proposed the health of the King, and called on all the Englishmen present to give him three cheers. These cheers, which we had practised to give in a musical way, greatly impressed the audience, and we were obliged to give an encore. They were certainly a contrast to the harsh "hurach" of the foreigners.

On the following day the King supplied the various competitors with a steam yacht, which took us along the Baltic coast eastwards. Count Funch (I hope I am spelling his name correctly), who represented the King, came to me, and asked me if I would get our men to give them some more "cheering." We did so, and they seemed delighted. We then gave them some singing. We could all sing more or less, and gave them "Old Folks at Home," "Lead, kindly Light," and other well-known English airs, which greatly delighted the people on board. Count Funch came again, and in his broken English said—

"Monsieur Alexandre, the most pootiful woman in Sweden wants you introduced."

Amid the envy of my men, I followed him, and was introduced to a lady with blue eyes, flaxen hair, but with a face and figure of abnormal adipose. We carried on a difficult conversation, and I retired as soon as I could decently do so. On my return, the Englanders with one voice spoke of their ill-luck, and the young sparks implored me to obtain an introduction for them. I prevailed upon Count Funch to do the needful, and he headed the procession. In about ten minutes they returned, looking gloomy, as though I had played a joke upon them. Truly, every eye forms its own beauty. I, at any rate, in all my travels, have never seen any feminine beauty

in face or form that can compare with the English maiden that one sees every day in old England.

We returned in the cool of the evening, giving the company as many English songs as we could, for Paul Waring had a sweet tenor voice, and Schofield a magnificent baritone, the rest of us being fairly musical, and so ended a day that will live long in the memory of those who participated in it.

Lord Kinnaird asked me the other day if I thought English athletes who participated in the Greek Games abroad should be assisted by a Government subsidy. I replied in the affirmative.

If we compete at all in these Greek Games, and it would be ungracious not to do so, we should give of our best, whatever their station in life, giving help to those who require it, as other Governments do, and thus earn the admiration and not the contempt of other nationalities. Aspirants in art, literature, or science—and in the latter I would place physical prowess—should never be thwarted by any limitations in the matter of expense, especially when they are accredited to do battle for the honour of their country.

I, although in my "forties," obtained first place in the strength, skill, and vaulting competitions during this visit, and the Swedish Government presented me with a very handsome hunting-knife.

Since that period, many of the continental nations have, by importing English trainers and adopting English methods, much improved their athletics and games. We, on the other hand, have adopted the Swedish system of physical drill. This drill, like all other physical exercises, creates circulation and promotes health, but used in excess, is too strenuous for delicate physiques, and for those in normal health is, by reason of its

repetition, dull and monotonous. Variety in exercise is highly desirable in order to prevent it becoming automatic and spiritless. It would be unreasonable to expect physical trainers to be constantly inventing new movements; but this is not necessary, for the dullest of all movements can be rendered interesting by the introduction of a musical accompaniment.

During the war, the recruits regarded their physical drill as "hard labour;" but I know from actual experience that if these movements were given to the accompaniment of music, say the "Marseillaise," played by the regimental band, the "hard labour" would disappear, and the emotions, not only of the body but of the mind, would be pleasurably accelerated.

Unfortunately, the Aldershot gymnastic training now seems to obtain its inspiration from the education committee, and in turn this authority largely relies upon the advice of the ladies in their advisory committee, and whose knowledge is confined to the theory of Swedish exercises. The physical training for the army and for our educational system should be initiated and supervised by doctors of the R.A.M.C., who have knowledge of the physiological conditions and requirements of the body, especially in relation to military service, with power to call in outside experience when necessary.

The ideal physical exercise should not merely promote circulation and health, but should take in the further problems of activity, skill, endurance and strength. This combination will, in turn, develop the quality of courage, without which man is but a poor creature.

## CHAPTER XXVI

### A RACE UP SNOWDON

We returned home by different routes. I, having some inquiries to make for H.M. Government, visited Berlin, a bleak, flat city, filled with immense buildings and many statues. I did not obtain from the authorities here either information or courtesy, nor did I in any part of Germany, where they seemed to have a contempt for "Englanders." I hope when this war is over they will at least have respect for our fighting qualities. The male population treated the women and dogs much alike, giving them the maximum of labour, while they sunned themselves in the idleness of self-complacency.

Frankfort-on-Maine is a beautiful town having a magnificent railway station, while all the streets are lined with trees, giving it a very home-like appearance.

Heidelberg, too, is a beautiful old town. As I marched up the hill, I saw a crocodile of schoolgirls approaching. They had pretty figures and pretty faces, and I at once thought that I had been mistaken in my former conjecture respecting the plainness of German women; but when I actually confronted the girls, I found they were a group of merry English schoolgirls.

On my way to Berne, a gentleman got into my carriage, and took the seat opposite to me.

He at once, as is usual with foreigners, began to speak to me in German ; I did my best to answer him in the same language. Now and then I floundered ; so did he. To another query I again hesitated, in fact, we both did so. Then he came out with a good, round, old-fashioned, English swear. We laughed and understood each other at once. He was an American, and had come to Berlin to try the Koch cure. We had an interesting chat, and I was sorry when he left the train a few stations on. The train now became a non-stopping one, and as hours passed on I became very hungry. At length we arrived at Basle, and seeing a large sign with the welcome word "Restauration" upon it, I asked a porter how long the train proposed to stop.

"Ten minid," he replied.

I asked another porter, he corroborated ; I then went out bareheaded into the "Restauration" and ordered soup. I was in the act of scalding myself with this, when I heard the train start ; I rushed out to see if it was my train. It was, and it was going very quickly. I thereupon put on my best sprint, but only succeeded in touching the buffers of the last carriage. I came back to the platform and asked a group of porters, who were all smoking cigarettes, for the station-master. He appeared, with one or two other officials, and I was soon in the centre of an excited gathering trying to explain my predicament in all the polyglot languages I could think of. All must have been bad, for no one appeared to understand me.

Then the station-master came forward, and with much gesticulation suggested that I should take a cab and drive to another station. I took his advice, got into a cab, and told the driver to take me to the other station. We arrived at

the police station, which was not what I wanted. I denounced the driver in strong English, and ordered him to take me to the other station.

We at length arrived there, and I was soon in the centre of another excited group of porters and officials, trying to tell them that all my belongings, cash, and even my hat, had gone away in the departing train. I asked if any of their number could speak English. One of their number went off and returned with a tall man. I asked him if he could speak English. "Thanks," he replied, and as this was the only word I could obtain from him, I concluded that he was a waiter and had been in the habit of receiving tips. I then went in search of the station-master. As I passed the open doorway of a room I saw, wonder upon wonders, my Gladstone bag, my umbrella, my overcoat and hat. I ran in and literally embraced them. When was the next train to Berne? I asked a porter. He pointed to one waiting in the station. I sprang in with my luggage and the train started. I cannot understand the incident yet, unless I got out for my soup at the station before we reached Basle and then drove across the town to the main station. I have not paid for that soup yet, but mean to do so when I have sufficiently mastered the language of that neighbourhood.

When I arrived at Berne I stayed at the Hotel Belle Vue, from where I was told I could obtain one of the best views in Switzerland. When I went out on the verandah to obtain this view I found to my disgust a thick mist which obscured everything fifty yards off. I was extremely disappointed and was about to turn away, when a remarkable phenomenon took place. A rift appeared in the thick walls of the mist, piercing it deeper and deeper, until in the far distance a

vision appeared; a snowy, white peak. It was, indeed, the mighty Jungfrau. I gazed eagerly, afraid lest Nature, who had been so kind, should draw down her curtain again, but instead the rift became a rivulet, with cloud boulders on a cloudy stream. It widened; the mountain slopes of mist became segregated. Titanic cliffs shook, collided with silent, shattering force, and fell helplessly aside before the omnipotent power of the sun, revealing every moment new surprises and new wonders.

I stood entranced, enchanted, as I saw these gigantic, spectral hosts melt away. At my feet there were vineyards and hayfields, in the deep valley below a turbulent river, crossed by a picturesque bridge, rushed on its course. The water, blue as Recketts' on a washing day, suggested dreams of naiads dipping their cambric and fine linen into its cerulean depths; but as the atmosphere became clearer, it showed pastures with multitudes of women gathering and making hay; it showed multitudes of bassinettes dotted all over the fields with multitudes of crowing babies calling to their busy mothers, who from time to time, unable to resist their infants' solicitations, would go, rake in hand, and kiss their precious offspring. Beyond were the vineyards, and beyond again the snow-clad slopes of the vast Bernese range, surmounted by their sovereign monarch, Jungfrau.

"You don't see this in the Strand in November," said a voice at my elbow. He was a visitor at the hotel.

"No," said I, without turning my head, lest I should lose any detail of the sight before me. "Things are on the grand scale here, but I expect they have their November days as much as we have."

We compared notes of travel; of mountains and lakes and passes, and moors, and rushing torrents, and we agreed that we had never seen so remarkable a vision as that before us.

In less than an hour, Nature was again drawing her curtain over the scene, assisting the operation with a very thin rain. I thought of the mothers and of the little babies, and hoped they would not get wet.

I visited various towns, barracks, and gymnasiums, taking notes, and receiving much more courtesy than I had experienced in Germany. After an all-night journey I arrived at the Gare de Lyon, Paris. The porter, smoking his cigarette with my Gladstone bag in hand, hailed a cab. Never in my experience had I ever seen, except perhaps in the illustrations of "Les Miserables," such a tumble-down vehicle, with such a decrepit-looking horse and driver, as that which presented itself. The vehicle and the driver alike appeared to be clothed in abnormally rheumatic joints, and I felt that if I got in, the whole fabric, material and animal, would collapse. The porter threw in my bag, and I was about to step in, when a gendarme, touching me on the shoulder, pointed to the bag. As I could not reply to his voluble French, I shrugged my shoulders, and muttered one word, "Anglais." This seemed to make him more furious than ever, and at last he insisted on my accompanying him to the police station. This I was about to do, when a tall, distinguished-looking man came up, and eyeing me curiously, said—

"Are you English?"

"Yes," said I.

"What's the trouble?" asked he.

"I cannot say," I returned.

He then had a wordy warfare with the gendarme

and I was beginning to think that he, too, would have to accompany the gendarme to the station, when the stranger, losing patience, took from his pocket a card case and presented a card to the gendarme.

Presto! What a change this made! The official stiffened, saluted, apologised, saluted again, and marched off.

"Why on earth didn't you get your bag marked at the frontier?" the stranger asked, laughing.

"Because," said I, "I used it as a pillow in my all-night journey last evening."

"Where do you want to go to?" said he.

"Hotel de la Bourse."

He gave the directions to the cabman, and shaking hands, we parted.

Immersed in the decrepit equipage, drawn by the decrepit quadruped, and driven by the decrepit Jehu, I wondered whether I should ever reach my hotel in safety, and as time wore on, I felt more uncertain than ever, but the driver at last brought me to its portals. The proprietor and the waiters formed the usual guard of honour, and requesting the former to settle with the cabman for me, I passed through the courtyard into the hotel. At the vestibule I heard a great noise in the street, and turning round, saw the landlord and driver in violent altercation with each other, presumably about the fare. I went upstairs, and looking out of the window on the first floor, I observed that the altercation had developed into a Greco-Roman contest; I passed upstairs, and looking out of the window on the second floor, saw that the contest was still undecided, the combatants rolling over each other on the floor.

I washed, and went down to breakfast. I apologised to the proprietor, who looked quite

serene, for the trouble I had evidently given him.

"Bah, it is nothing," he said; "the rascal wanted to charge Monsieur many times his fare, and Monsieur is my guest, and must not be imposed upon."

Then came a terrible noise in the street. I thought the decrepit one must have collected all the other decrepits in the city, and was about to make an onslaught on the Hotel de la Bourse.

"What is that noise?" I asked the landlord.

He shrugged his shoulders. "It is nothing, Monsieur," he assured me; "it is only la Bourse starting business for the day."

After visiting various towns in France, I returned home. I found a letter from Lord Wolseley awaiting me, in which he said—

"I have received so much benefit from the pulley apparatus which you had made for me that now I feel I should like very much heavier weights to practise my new strength upon, and would be glad if you would have them sent to me."

I sent him his weights, but protested against their use, and gave him a short lecture upon the wisdom of "moderation." It is a natural desire to any one who has acquired fresh vigour in mind or body, to long to give expression to the newly found power. A wise discretion, however, should never be absent in these efforts. The middle-aged and old too often take liberties based upon the traditions of their early manhood.

I have, myself, erred in this respect. I was climbing up Snowdon, from the Bethgellert side. Half a mile from the summit I came upon a group of tourists which included some Americans; the latter, being in a sportive humour, were arranging a handicap to the top of the mountain. They looked at me doubtfully, then one of them said—

"We are arranging a handicap up to the top, I guess your running days are about over, but we are willing to give you a big handicap if you will join in the sport."

Now the idea of my receiving a handicap, especially from an American, was very distasteful to me. I therefore replied—

"I shall be glad to join in the race, but I don't care to receive any start, for if I won there would be no honour in it, and if I lost, I should lose my dignity also. I will, therefore, start from 'scratch,' for then if I win there will be much honour, and if I lose there will be no disgrace."

I was accordingly placed—amidst much merriment, for I was in my forties—on the scratch line. The signal was given, and off we started. It was not altogether running, for there was some climbing to be done, and here I had an advantage. I gradually overhauled my men, got level with the limit man, and saw victory within my grasp, when the inevitable "stitch," which accompanies excess of effort, attacked me unpleasantly. I called, however, on my will power, and just landed in first by a few feet. Then I lay down and was bad for some time. I was paying the penalty. I was gratified, however, by hearing one of the Americans remark—

"If England's old men can run like that, what price their young men?"

I sat up. "Steady there," said I. "Don't forget that 'tis a woman who is only as old as she looks, and a man as old as he feels."

"Good," said they, "a good argument; but the way you got over those boulders is about a mystery to us, and I reckon we won't forget it."

We had a pleasant conversation, but the episode was not over yet, for one of the Americans stood up, and said to his companions—

"I am just going to stand on the very highest pinnacle of this 'rise,' then I guess my feet will have been a little bit higher than any of the boys."

He moved off. I said to his companion—

"He's bent on record breaking: would you like to see me place my feet higher than his?"

"That's just his way; but I don't see how you can place your feet higher than his. That cairn seems to be the highest point, and any one can climb on to the top of that if they are so inclined."

"Well, I will try," said I, and walked after his companion.

I saw him approach and clamber up the rocky cairn which marks the extreme summit of Snowdon. I clambered up also on the opposite side. We both reached the top simultaneously.

"Hello," said he, "I'm just going to stand on the top of these stones. Then I can tell the boys that my feet have been higher than theirs."

He stood up with some little trepidation, for it was blowing a stiff breeze. When he had finished I placed my hands on the topmost jagged rock, and throwing my feet up in the air, performed what is technically known as a "hands-balance."

"Je-hosh-a-phat!" he shouted, "what are you doing?"

"Trying to place my feet higher than anybody else," I answered.

When we came down and he explained the situation, there was much merriment amongst the party.

Sandow, the famous strong man, called upon me about this time. I think he was an Austrian, and he spoke in broken English. We had a long

talk about feats of strength, etc., and agreed that if we were to have a competition, it would have a stalemate result, for his strength was of the *extensor* or pushing type. Mine being of the *flexor* or pulling variety. He then broached the real object of his visit. He stated that he had for some considerable time been troubled with lassitude, and found it very difficult at times to perform his advertised feats of strength, and he wished for my advice on the matter.

I said I would like to see his development, whereupon, after locking the door of my room, he stripped. He certainly had a most remarkable development, his *extensor* system being beautifully marked; his general build was of the Farnese Hercules type, although his stature was rather short for him to reach that ideal. I sounded him all over; it was like tapping at a Milner's safe.

While he was dressing I told him that he was evidently suffering from staleness, and warned him against the dangers that lay before him, or any other person, possessed of extreme muscular development. I explained to him that large muscles required an excess blood current to maintain their nutriment and waste, consequent upon effort. This blood current had a tendency to enlarge the arteries, and when the time came when his vitality or stimulus ceased, there was a danger that the walls of the arteries would slightly collapse and create heart trouble. My opinion seemed to alarm him.

"What am I to do?" he asked.

"Gradually give up your work."

"If I did that my livelihood would be gone."

"The change must be a gradual one, and in the meantime you could also change the character of your work. Why not perform classic statuary

under the limelight ? The public would be glad to see that, and you would obtain a handsome salary for doing so."

Sandow followed my advice upon this point, and afterwards delighted many sightseers with his imitation of Greek and Classic statuary.

## CHAPTER XXVII

### THE TRAVELLING "MUMMERS"

THE advice which I had given Sandow applied in a somewhat lesser degree to my own abnormal development. One can have too much of a good thing, and I therefore determined gradually to reduce my high state of training and substitute a more moderate condition of things. It took, with one or two accidents, some years to safely accomplish this, but I felt satisfied that I was doing right, and managed it so successfully that, when called upon, my reserves seldom fail me.

In course of time I relinquished my active work at Liverpool, and subsided into semi-retirement. It was a great change to relinquish paved streets for sand-dunes, but I did not altogether give up work, nor have I done so yet. If I were asked, "When should a man do this?" I would feel inclined to reply, "Not until the day before he dies," for "without motion nothing is." My advice, therefore, to those who have led an active life and are obliged by circumstances to retire, is that they should adopt a partial retirement, a make-believe retirement, and above all things, that they should continue to maintain some interest in life.

It is the privilege of old age to place a high value upon retrospection. To none do Charles Lamb's words, "The old familiar faces," appeal

so vividly, so happily, or so tragically. We reap what we have sown in friendships or in memories, and poor indeed is he who cannot obtain some sunshine from these sources.

In the medley of happenings which I have ventured to put down in this book, I fear I have related many things which might well have been left unsaid, and perhaps I have neglected some incidents which would try the reader's patience less.

I might tell how I lunched one day with Colonel Cody, of Wild West fame; how keen he was over feats of swordsmanship. How I offered to blindfold myself, to place an apple upon the back of his neck while in a kneeling posture, and then, with one cut of the sword, cut the apple in halves. How he declined, and how my secretary Miss H. Foster, who was with me, offered to place her head at my disposal, and how I declined to risk her future usefulness; and how I performed the feat upon my own neck, to the mystification of the famous scout.

And with what pleasure I attended an athletic dinner at the Holborn Restaurant, and how gratified I was at hearing my health proposed by the chairman, Lord Balfour of Burleigh, himself once so famous an athlete, and the lineal descendant of the Bruce whose exploits filled our youthful imaginations, and who gave to the world the lesson of the spider and perseverance.

Or again, when passing through a famous London exhibition, I overheard a strangely familiar voice, in the richest Irish brogue, appeal to the Saxon passers-by to buy his wares.

"Don't forget, ladies and gintlemen, that ivery toime yez buy a handkerchief, or pair of socks, ye are helping the poor auld distressed ladies of Donegal and the wild parts of Ireland."

"Hello, Sullivanski," said I, shaking hands, "what new game is this you're up to?"

He looked round carefully, then in a stage whisper said—

"Philanthropy, my bhoy, and it's the best of them all, for, ye see, ye gladden the hearts of your customers by making them feel they have done a good action."

"But," said I, "do all the proceeds really go to the distressed ladies of Donegal?"

He rubbed his chin, then said solemnly—

"I kape a pair of ould ladies constantly at work there; if they cannot supply me with sufficient stuff, why, it's Manchester, of course, I have to get it from. Come round and have a dhrink."

I went inside the counter, and behind a screen, where we had some tea. When leaving, I said—

"By the way, you're not in Parliament yet?"

"No," said he, "but I'm getting nearer; I'm only two or three miles away now."

I bade him farewell, and often wondered whether he would gain his heart's desire. I feel, too, that I might have related the many visits I paid to my old gypsy friend, Lawrence, who had long since given up his former occupations, and had become a full-fledged proprietor of an itinerant theatre. The last time I visited him, I was accompanied by my optimist friend, E. S. It was in the Eastern Counties, and we had been walking through the wheat-growing districts of Lincolnshire, when we came upon a somewhat populous village. We found the gate posts covered with bills announcing that the play of "Hamlet" would be performed that evening at the great "Allied Theatre."

"Why," said I, "it must be old Tom Lawrence who is here."

"Let us find him out," E. S. replied.

We were not long in doing so. The theatre, half wood, half canvas, stood in a field at the farther outskirts of the village. We found Lawrence and his still charming wife, with many new children, in the living carriage. They were delighted to see us, and found us a corner at their table, where we were soon enjoying high tea, spinning and listening to yarns in topsy-turvy confusion. Lawrence was full of troubles and anxieties. The company, he said were so difficult to manage. Cholmondeley Granville, his leading man, would never leave his majesty behind him at the theatre, but always insisted upon patronising everybody and everything outside the theatre.

"I have told him," said Lawrence, "that he really is not 'Richard III.' or 'Henry VIII.' or 'Ingomar,' but he won't realise it, and talks to every one like these majesties. Then there's Spencer Lytton, our walking gent."

"He's dreadful," interrupted Mrs. Lawrence; "he goes about the town dressed up in our most fashionable properties, and will scarcely condescend to notice any other member of the company."

"We'll be in a pickle to-night," said Lawrence, "we are short-handed."

"I don't mind playing Hamlet," remarked the optimist.

Mr. and Mrs. Lawrence looked at him sadly. After more tea and more delightful talk, we arrived at a compromise, and the ghost of Hamlet's father, and the gravedigger were undertaken by two new members of the company. I will not vouch for the accuracy of the text, but I understand that the action was all that could be desired. We spent a couple of days with the Lawrences, thoroughly enjoying ourselves, and watched, as patrons in the front row, the romantic

drama of "East Lynne," and the hair-raising melodrama of "Maria; or, The Murder in the Red Barn."

After parting with our good friends we pursued our way, passing from the level roads of Lincolnshire into the hilly and more beautiful district of Derbyshire, staying some time at the pretty village of Rowsley, then along the picturesque road to Matlock Bath. Walking has always been one of my greatest recreations, and the pleasure is always enhanced by pleasant companionship. Thus, interesting districts can be made dull, or dull districts interesting, according to the company in which you find yourself.

One Sunday I walked from Palmer's Green to Tottenham Court Road, through densely crowded streets, passing sad-eyed people at every corner, jostling against the careworn and miserable, seeing very little to elevate, but the journey of several miles was made light and pleasant by the bright and vivacious criticisms and conversational power of my companion.

If one has eyes to see and ears to hear a companion is not absolutely necessary. You will meet plenty on the road, that is, if you are not too exclusive. We ought, indeed, to remember that there is "good in everything."

When I arrived, somewhat to my dismay, in my "sixties," I wrote to my optimist friend E. S. and suggested a long tramp to celebrate the event.

"We are now in our 'sixties,'" I wrote, "and we ought to show our contempt of Father Time by at least taking a walk across England."

He replied, repudiating my attempt to drag him into the "lean and slippered pantaloon" condition of threescore years, but would be delighted to take on the tramp. Then the war

broke out, and I wrote at once to Lord C. Beresford, saying that if I were too old to fight, I might do some good by lecturing to the soldiers on "Physical Training Tips."

He replied, "I think your idea of lecturing to the soldiers a very good one, and I will mention it in the proper quarter as soon as I get a chance, but it is difficult to obtain a hearing at the War Office just now, they are so very busy. It is a cruel fate that *Anno Domini* prevents you and me from being where we should like to be, in the fighting line, but we make up for this by doing what we can at home to help our brave fellows who are doing the fighting."

Nothing further came of my offer, and after helping all I could, which included our son entering the army, we went on with our plan of a long tramp, and met at Scarborough for this purpose. We stayed at an hotel facing the water; at night time the pert chamber-maid threw up the blinds of our bedroom, remarking—

"No one can see you, except it be the Kaiser."

We were glad indeed of the salt sea-air, and listened until a late hour to the rolling waves of the North Sea breaking against the base of our hotel, and to the fog signals of mine-sweepers, as they searched for port. It was a comfortable, double-bedded room that we occupied—it has since had a shell through it from the enemy's guns—and we obtained a good rest before undertaking our tramp on the morrow.

We adopted the plan of tying labels on to the handles of our Gladstone bags, and addressing them to the railway station somewhere near where we proposed to stop for the night. Taking a last farewell look at the North Sea, we turned westward, and walked at a good pace until we left the town behind us. Here we met a tramp from

whom we inquired the way. He told us to follow the telegraph wires. This ultimately landed us in a field, from which we were ejected by the scornful vituperation of a farmer's angry wife. E. S. having bowed and scraped himself out of her presence with much ceremony, we regained the road, and proceeded on our way.

The road was rough, and after making a gradual climb for about ten miles, E. S. declared that he had a nail in one of his boots, which was giving him trouble. He thereupon took it off, and having obtained a stone, proceeded to put the recalcitrant nail in its proper place. I afterwards found out that this was a device of his to obtain a rest. It was more ingenious and less damaging to one's dignity than to own up one was tired. I, meanwhile, threw myself on my back on the green sward, renewing the acquaintance of my childhood's days by looking attentively at the roadside buttercups and daisies, tiny pimpernels, wild periwinkles, ragged robins, shepherd's purse, wild pansies, yellow rattles, and purple foxgloves, all of which had a retrospective memory for me, carrying me back to days when as a child I collected them in places now usurped by bricks and mortar.

"How is the nail?" I inquired.

"All right, but I'm getting thirsty."

"There is an inn not far from here; I have been on this road before." I thereupon related my previous midnight run with the stage-coach. When we arrived at the inn, we inquired if we could have a drink of milk, as we were both abstainers.

"Milk," said the landlord scornfully: "this is not a milkshop, it's a public-house."

"We are walking across England," said E. S., "and have taken a solemn oath to do so without

taking beer. Now let us have the milk, and we will pay you the price we would pay for beer."

"That makes a difference," said the landlord, somewhat mollified; and going out to the back of the house, we heard him issuing orders, and in a short time a woman entered with a tray containing a large jug of milk and a couple of glasses. Having satisfied our thirst, we regained the road, which still gradually inclined upwards.

"So you are really in the sixties," remarked the optimist, "well, I don't remember my exact age, but I feel about twenty—never felt so fit in all my life."

"Your exact age is fifty-eight, and what makes you feel fit is the North Sea breezes and the scents from the moors, and that good glass of milk, and fixing that nail all right."

"Well, I don't know what it is, but I certainly feel all right; only for this beastly road, which is like a lot of little shark's teeth, it would be tip-top."

"All Yorkshire roads, especially if they are not kept in good repair, have the same roughness, being for the most part made of substantial granite."

"Well, where is the next stop? I hope they will have plenty of fruit and vegetables and nuts where we stop at."

He thereupon proceeded to give me a lecture on the benefits of fruitarianism, vegetarianism, and nutarianism. I scoffed, and said I preferred to be a "moderation in all things" man, and so the argument lasted until we reached our stopping place for the first day. We had tramped about eighteen miles. We proceeded to the principal inn, but were driven out by the smell of peat smoke, odour of ale, and angry voices in controversy. We asked a fine-looking young farmer

with a fresh complexion if there was another inn.

"None better than this," he replied. "You go back to Mrs. Coates, the postman's wife. She lives at the first cottage coming into the village. You'll be comfortable there all right."

We thanked him, went back to the cottage indicated, and after opening the garden gate, proceeded up the path. At each side of the porch there was a quaint, diamond-paned window, and the entire front of the cottage was covered with roses and honeysuckle. We knocked, and a rosy-faced, middle-aged woman opened the door for us. We told her our requirements, and she bade us enter.

"While you are washing," she said, "I will get your supper ready."

We went to our respective rooms, and having washed, went down to supper. Never did we see a table groaning under the weight of so many good things; ham and eggs, cold beef, cold ham, pickles of all sorts, a large apple-pie, an equally substantial milk pudding, home-made cakes, and tarts of all descriptions. It was a feast for the gods, especially after a walk of eighteen miles. We both did justice to it, with copious drinks of tea afterwards, and the optimist forgot all about fruitarianism, vegetarianism, and nutarianism.

Later on, he noticed one of my drill books open on the piano stand. He informed the landlady that I was the unlucky author, and I at once went up in her estimation. She said it was the property of the village schoolmistress, who lodged with her, but who was now away on her holidays.

In the morning we felt quite refreshed. E. S. said that he felt like nineteen years of age; I told him if he went on with that continuous reduction of years, he would soon be an infant once

more. The landlord, who was also the village postman, now came in, and invited us to inspect his small holding of twelve acres. We went through the back part of the house. It was a composite cultivation, and a pretty sight it was. On the right, bearded barley rustled and jostled against each other. Higher up a patch of oats nodded and gossiped to their heart's content; and higher still a large patch of waving corn shivered and dived, and opened its ranks, as the wind gusts came along its golden surface. On the left of the holding there was a substantial orchard, containing apple, pear, and plum trees, with cherry trees already denuded of their fruit. On the open ground beyond, protected by a margin of gooseberry and black-currant bushes, there were cabbage patches, potato trenches, lettuce, onions, and the lighter vegetables for table use.

"You surely do not do all this labour yourself?" I asked.

"With the aid of the children," he smiled back, "and a neighbour comes in occasionally."

"Does it pay you?" I asked.

"Very well," he replied; "but I doubt if it would if I had to pay for labour."

After partaking of an epicurean breakfast, we asked for our bill, and we were so much astonished at the amount that I must place it here on record, viz. three shillings each! We managed to make it up by small gifts to the children, and after wishing our worthy landlord and landlady farewell, proceeded on our tramp.

## CHAPTER XXVIII

### A WALK ACROSS ENGLAND

After we had cleared the village we commenced to sing, so merry and irresponsible felt we; but after proceeding a couple of miles we came upon a gypsy encampment on the left-hand side of the road. There were three or four vans and the usual cave-like tent, at the front of which a fire was burning. Some brown children were coming from the moors at either side. They had been collecting whinberries, and one who had not secured sufficient was ordered back by his parent to complete his task.

We stopped singing, the men and women looking curiously at us, wondering, no doubt, if we were wandering minstrels; but after saluting, and wishing them good morning, we went on our way. Moors stretched out on either side of us, covered with all the colours of the rainbow, their royalties, the golden gorse and purple heather, being in the ascendant, and arraying the ground with such gorgeous splendour that one is not surprised that Linnæus, the great naturalist, when first he saw these beauties on English soil, knelt down and thanked God for the joy it gave him. We longed to explore these moors, but could not spare the time, and in another couple of miles passed through a somewhat larger village than that which we had left.

We now got into richer country, for there were vast fields at either side, filled with agricultural produce, and apparently in the very best condition. The road also became more of an up and down nature, rendering it more easy to tramp, for the *flexor* and *extensor* muscles are rested alternately; nevertheless, E. S. complained once more of the nail in his boot, and taking it off, hammered at it until he had had a fairly good rest.

We soon reached a pretty hamlet at the foot of a couple of hills, a shallow river with many boulders of various sizes scattered on its bed, with fairly deep waters gurgling and twisting about their base, which, when released, went swiftly on their way. We had a scientific discourse over boulders and boulder clay. E. S., who was a much-travelled man, mentioned that he had seen the mighty boulder in Russia upon which the statue of Peter the Great stands, and also the mightier one in one of the Swiss cantons on the top surface of which a chalet and vineyard seemed to thrive very comfortably. We walked up the opposite hill, and taking a bend of the road to the north, and again to the west, we had a beautiful prospect before us, crops of every kind being in evidence. On our left we came to what was apparently a very large estate. At each side of the ornamental iron gates a proud griffin raised its aristocratic head, but the lodge within the gates was empty, and the windows shattered. There was no one near to satisfy our curiosity, we therefore continued our way along the very pleasant road.

Suddenly the sky commenced to darken, and heavy raindrops began to fall, accompanied by flashes of lightning and quick rolling of thunder. It came on so sharply that we had little time to

look about for shelter; our travelling knowledge made us avoid the shelter of trees. We looked about and saw ahead of us what appeared to be a farm, and this we made for. An Airedale terrier barked furiously at us as we unlatched the gate, but we persevered with an air of proprietorship, which, however, did not deceive the dog, for it continued to bark loudly at our heels until we reached the door of the farmhouse. We knocked, and an old man with a young lady came to the door. We asked if we might shelter during the storm. He paused, examined us from head to foot; then the young lady interposed on our behalf, and we were invited to come in and sit by the fireside. We were soon on the best possible terms with the farmer and his daughter, and as the steam rose from our wet clothing, we argued about free trade and protection.

The farmer was all for the latter. He had a farm of two hundred and forty acres, and said he was obliged to leave the greater portion of it in grass, as he could not obtain labour for cultivating it, and moreover could not be assured of obtaining a reasonable price for his cereals when grown. I asked him what wages he paid his men.

"One guinea per week," he replied; "but what is the good of that, when they can enter the police force in one of the large towns, and obtain twenty-eight shillings per week, with a pension after twenty years' service?"

He also spoke of the monotony of country and village life, and said things would have to be much altered if we wished to maintain a working population in the rural districts.

Refusing a hearty invitation to stay and have tea, we bade good-bye to our host and his pleasant daughter, and proceeded on our way, passing a

small village, the principal building of which was the village inn, with a large sign-board swinging over its doorway. We now came into flat country, and far ahead we had glimpses of a high tower, which we rightly conjectured was York Minster.

Arriving at the ancient city, we called to put up at its principal hotel, but the manageress looked very dubious at our rain and dust stained attire. E. S. with one of his best smiles told her we were on a walking tour, and asked her if she would send to the station for our luggage. She agreed, but in return begged us to go up to our rooms by the back staircase, as the ladies were now coming downstairs to dinner. We agreed, and in a short time after the arrival of our luggage, washed and dressed and joined the fashionables downstairs. We had walked twenty-four miles and enjoyed our dinner in consequence.

On the following morning we visited the old city walls, the old priory, the meadows, the river, traversed the quaint streets, and lastly visited the Minster, and although we had seen it all before, were as much impressed as ever with its loftiness, the rich colouring of its windows, its interesting memorials and ancient crypt. When we suggested to the guide that we should like to climb on to the tower, he did not seem enthusiastic. We offered to go alone, which suggestion pleased him; he said we should find no one there, and would obtain a magnificent view. We, however, found a Scotchman on the summit, and had an interesting conversation with him about the "land o' cakes." The view was certainly very fine, showing a country very rich in agricultural produce.

We now started our daily walk, and going out to the west side of the city we soon gained the high-road, upon which tradition says Dick Turpin made his famous ride to York. It was very

dusty, and we were glad to leave it and enter a minor road which led us slightly to the north-west. The nature of the road soon became hilly and E. S. soon found trouble with a nail in his boot, but after a reasonable rest on the green sward, we proceeded upward and upward like the famous climber in Longfellow's poem, "Excelsior." About noon we came to a fairly large village, and going to the inn ordered dinner. He was a surly landlord; I think he was annoyed that we did not order flagons of ale and stirrup cups of wine, but that was his business. Resuming our journey, which was of an upward kind, we passed through a pretty, not to say wild, country, less cultivated than that previously traversed. The hedgerows on either side were jagged and overgrown: but this did not last long, for we soon came upon the beautiful demesne of Castle Howard, the seat of the Earl of Carlisle. As we gazed undisturbed at this beautiful picture, we wondered what the position of travellers would be when our country was subdivided into small holdings; finally agreeing that we should have less fresh air, less liberty, and less pleasure, and in lieu would be supplied with more smoke, more landlords, more whips, and more bulldogs to warn off trespassers.

We shortly afterwards arrived at the quaint little town of Knaresborough, some eighteen miles from York, and as E. S. was still troubled with his boot, we agreed to stay there for the night and put up at the old-fashioned inn of the Elephant and Castle. The agreeable landlady made us very welcome, and provided us with an excellent dinner, after which we renewed our acquaintance with the old town.

It was a strange sight to look over the town bridge, and see far down in a deep ravine, a narrow

but active river, with business-like barges sailing upon it. On one side modern buildings and on the other a great castle stronghold, where Richard II. was once imprisoned. Close by there was a large cave, and a dripping well, which petrified everything its waters touched. Higher up in the town we called at the oldest apothecary's shop in England, dating, the proprietor told us, from the thirteenth century.

In the morning, after raising our hats to the memory of Metcalf, the great road-maker, and the other great Knaresborough native, Mother Shipton, whom tradition states was last seen riding on a broomstick up to the moon, we walked to Harrogate, about three miles away. It was a gradual ascent, the road at either side being for the most part occupied by suburban villas and other residences.

Harrogate was full of fashionables, and no place for us, so we walked across the "Stray" and reached the Ilkley road. We tramped some miles between high hedgerows, rich with blossoms; white convolvuli, old-fashioned eglantine, orange-coloured honeysuckle, and sweet brier-rose, tumbling over each other in lavish confusion. We passed a very comfortable-looking inn, and shortly afterwards, around a bend in the road, came upon a dusty and tired-looking horseman, who asked in a weary tone if we could inform him where there was an inn. E. S. told him that there was one at Harrogate, about seven miles away. His countenance fell, and he looked the picture of despondency as he pursued his way.

"Why," said I to my companion, "did you not tell the man there was a good inn around the corner, only fifty yards away?"

"I wanted to give him a glad surprise, like

Maud Müller in Longfellow. I think it does one good to get a good and glad surprise now and then, and he's sure to get one when he sees the inn."

We passed Otley on our left, a small manufacturing town, with a beautiful environment. We crossed over many stiles, and through plantations, until we reached the open country beyond. Then the entire character of the landscape changed, it being a wild and desolate moorland, with stray granite boulders on its surface. We met no living creature, and practically found our way by instinct, and an occasional look at the skies. E. S. was troubled with his boot again, and took it off to eradicate the offending nail. I, too, was glad of the rest, and remembered how, as a mere youth, I had tramped this moor in a snowstorm.

After more tramping, we came very suddenly upon the little town of Ilkley, lying in a hollow on the banks of the river Wharfe. We stayed at the old-fashioned Crescent Hotel, at the rear of which there was a courtyard filled with motors and brakes, evidently an excursion party from one of the distant cities. The pleasure-seekers were singing the "Farmer's Boy," which they rendered very musically. This song, which we heard repeatedly on our tramp, is still the most favourite rural song in the country, especially with ostlers and country inn servitors, a great compliment to its shoemaker author of one hundred and fifty years ago—

> "I can plough and sow, and reap and mow,
> And be a farmer's boy, and be a farmer's boy."

After dinner we visited the various sights of Ilkley, which includes many large hydros, the Cow and Calf boulders, the river Wharfe, a

pretty watercourse called Heber's Ghyll, situated on the edge of a wood, and the three large Saxon crosses, which ornament the churchyard.

In the morning we started for Bolton Abbey, about six miles away over a good surfaced road. Four miles out we came upon a quantity of cows being milked in the open roadway, with motors in attendance to take the milk away to their distant depôts. E. S. informed one of the rosy milkmaids that he had never yet tasted milk before it had reached the village pump, and wondered whether the young lady would gratify our thirsty curiosity by allowing us to have a glass. The milkmaid smiled, and, tripping off, returned with a couple of glasses, into which she milked the genuine article. We drank her health, and paid her for our pleasure.

Shortly afterwards we came upon Bartrams Towers, an old castle upon a high, rocky mound, famous for its shepherd earl, the nurse having substituted her own child as the heir, afterward confessing on her death-bed, and leading to the elevation of the rightful heir, who at the time was following the vocation of a shepherd.

A mile or two farther on, we came upon Bolton Abbey, made famous in verse by Wordsworth, and in art by Landseer. Bolton woods in the spring-time is one of Nature's principal aviaries, but this was the silent month for birds, and the sweet lisping notes of the robin, reinforced by the pipings of the bullfinch, alone met our ear as they apologised for the silence of the other feathered inhabitants. A swift-rushing torrent enclosed in a deep gully surmounted by a rocky eminence, called the Stryd, made up by its musical gurgling sounds in some measure for the absent melodies of the birds. The scenery about here was remarkable for its

variety—woods, rocks, water, and everlasting moorlands.

Bolton Hall, close by, is owned by the Duke of Devonshire. Passing through another six miles of this delightful country, we came to the old town of Skipton. In the High Street we met Sir James Crichton Browne, the eminent surgeon, who was much interested in our tramp, and wished that he himself could tear himself from his professional duties and follow our example.

"I thought you had better know him," said E. S., who had introduced me; "he is, you know, Commissioner of Lunacy," and he looked at me thoughtfully.

"He appears to have known you for a long time," I retorted; and, with light banter, we continued our way, visiting the castle, the once stronghold of the Cliffords, and other objects of local interest.

## CHAPTER XXIX

### ON THE ROAD

We had received an invitation from some Yorkshire friends, who had taken a furnished cottage at Grassington, to visit them, and as it was only nine miles due north out of our way, we went there. Grassington, as a tall woman said of her short husband, was not much to look at, but like the short one, it had other virtues. The air was very bracing, and it stood amidst very interesting country.

Wishing to make ourselves presentable before calling upon our friends, we determined to have a shave, and asked a man in the High Street where the local hairdresser resided. He pointed to the blacksmith's forge, where the clang of the hammer on the anvil was making merry music. We paused, then tossed up to decide which of us would undergo the ordeal first. I lost, and went in. I explained my errand to the brawny cyclops, who, pointing to a chair, said, "Sit thee down." I sat down. I heard a rasping sound, as though a cutlass was being sharpened, then I felt a blob of soapsuds on my chin, and opening the mouth was not to be thought of until the operation was over. After the torture I escaped outside.

"Well?" said E. S., who was waiting to hear the result.

"Tip-top," said I; "don't be long."

He went in, and I overheard snatches of bright conversation, then a muffled silence, protestations, and capital O's. In a short time E. S. came out, holding his handkerchief to his chin, and followed by the blacksmith. The latter looked at me with a kindly smile, and beckoning me to him, whispered in my ear—

"I feel benevolent to thee."

It was a quaint expression, and I have never been able to fathom its meaning. E. S. was cross, and wanted to know why I did not inform him of my experience.

"We are out for experience," I replied, "and I do not wish for a monopoly of it."

When we arrived at Rosewood Cottage, we found our friends absent, but a letter addressed to us was on the doorstep. We tore it open, and found a brief note stating that they were tired of waiting for us, but would return as soon as possible. This was not very good news, for we had walked many miles, and were tired and hungry. Then we reasoned, and came to the conclusion that many primitive inhabitants hide their doorkey under the mat. We searched, and lo! it was there. In a trice we were inside, preparing our own dinner.

We arranged that after feasting we would go out, lock the door, replace the key, and arrive later on, a pair of weary travellers; but this plot did not carry, for we were discovered red-handed and others joined in our feast.

We were a merry party, and spent a very enjoyable week-end, visiting all the sylvan beauties of the neighbourhood. Then we retraced our steps to Skipton, and walked in the direction of Colne, a manufacturing town standing on a ridge and full of memories of Halliwell Sutcliffe's romantic writings. We now had a spell of

flagged pavements, and passing tramcars. When we reached Nelson and inquired the way of a man, he looked at our dusty appearance, and then said in a good-natured tone—

"Hast thee noa brass to pay for thee tram fare?" and putting his hand into his trousers pocket, he pulled out a handful of mixed coins. "Tak' what thee wants," he said, opening his hand.

Truly, Lancashire folk are proverbially generous-hearted. When we told him we preferred walking, he looked as if he doubted our sanity, and shaking his head, walked away.

Arriving at Burnley, we stayed at the old-fashioned Bull Hotel, and were well served. After dinner we walked through the streets. It seemed a very busy and prosperous town. We stopped a man and asked him what the town was principally noted for. He looked at us as though pitying our ignorance, then said, "Brass and football."

In the evening we attended an entertainment and in the morning walked to Whalley Abbey, eleven miles. The first five or six miles was flagged pavements, with bricks and mortar in abundance, not at all conducive to healthy walking; but when we had cleared this, we came into beautiful woodland country again, and in a short time arrived at Whalley Abbey, a beautiful ruin kept well in repair, and partly inhabited. This, with the ancient church close by, forms the scene of much of the plot of Harrison Ainsworth's "Lancashire Witches," and further on at the adjoining village of Mitton there is an ancient church with an ancient Bible chained to its desk. This sightseeing took up a little of our time, but it was worth seeing, and forms an interesting link in our past history.

As E. S. was troubled with a nail in his boot, we called a halt, and had a meal in a very old-world part of England, full of ghosts and memories of the past. After a good rest, lying on our backs on the grass adjoining the roadway, we started for Preston, some ten miles away. It was a magnificent road, with an avenue of tall giant trees at either side, upon the branches of which every gust of wind sang a new song, the baby leaves at the top giving a lighter and more treble sound in its accompaniment.

We had an argument about trees. E. S. was for cutting them down and giving more light and air. I protested against this vandalism, and urged the usefulness of trees as a shelter for our birds, as a medium for assisting the rainfall, and as a cooling retreat for ourselves, to all of which virtues E. S. was very sceptical. Nevertheless, I think he was glad, as I certainly was, of the cool shade which the great trees gave us on that hot August day. We arrived at Preston and put up at the picturesque hotel facing the Park.

Proud Preston, as it is called, dates from the Saxon times of Athelstane, and has had a varied and somewhat battered experience, for it has seen many battles, has been stormed by Oliver Cromwell, and Prince Charles Edward passed through it on his way to and from Derby. But little of these ancient glories remain; everything appears to have been subjected to the requirements of trade, and huge mills abound in every direction. The Town Hall, however, is a beautiful Gothic building, with a fine spire nearly two hundred feet high, and containing a musical chime of bells. This spire, however, is excelled by that of a Roman Catholic chapel on the banks of the Ribble, built by Hansom, of "Hansom" fame. The spire reaches a height of over three hundred

feet, and with the exception of Salisbury Cathedral, is the highest in England. We must not forget, too, that Preston gave to the manufacturing world, Arkwright, the inventor of the spinning frame, and that Livesey initiated from here the total abstention movement.

In the morning we commenced our last twenty miles, by crossing over the Ribble, then at flood-tide and overlapping its banks at either side. A rowing boat, manned by rosy-cheeked and luminous-eyed Lancashire witches, shot out from beneath the arches of the bridge on which we were standing, their merry laughter comparing favourably with the woe-begone expression of some boys on the banks, who, slates in hand, were apparently going "unwillingly to school."

We mounted a hill, and stopped to admire Penwortham Woods. A beautiful avenue of trees ran through its centre, at the end of which stood the old church of Penwortham, in excellent condition, for, as the chronicler says, "It was so well hidden with trees, that the great mutilator, Cromwell, did not see it." Before the front porch the path was laid out right and left with flower-beds around the various gravestones. On the left was the old priory, an ancient edifice, where, we were told, Canon Rawnsley, the friend of Tennyson, was then in residence. To the rear of the church, the graveyard, filled with many an ancient tombstone, sloped down towards the river. We were reading of the virtues of a certain blacksmith on a tombstone dating some centuries back, the clang of a hammer on the anvil at some neighbouring forge appropriately sounding on the air. As we looked at the ancient gravestone, an old man, bent with age, and leaning on a stick, approached us. Seeing our interest in the grave, he said—

"Dost thee hear that smitin' o' hammer on th' anvil?"

We nodded.

"It's same forge an' same stock o' family as yon man buried down theere."

We thanked him for his information, and asked his age.

"Nigh fourscore and ten," he said, somewhat proudly. He gave us more particulars of the neighbourhood, which were very interesting. He said that he remembered the music in the church being played by stringed instruments, which he thought was much better than the modern organ. After some more gossip, we bade him farewell, and as we repassed the front porch we could almost see in imagination the portly and dignified figure of Sir Roger de Coverley, leaning upon his staff, and accompanied by his wife and daughter, leaving the church and passing through his line of tenants at either side, wishing them the "Good morning," and receiving back many curtseys and respectful salutations, his daughter, meanwhile, surreptitiously giving sweetmeats to the favoured children on her side of the walk. We returned through the long and somewhat dark avenue of trees, the rooks overhead loudly calling their farewell to us as we passed on our way.

Pleasant country lanes with high hedges, thick with many a blossom and sweet with many a scent, were now our companions for the rest of our journey. Wild weeds in gaudy colours, meadow-sweet and bright-hued foxgloves, lay thickly under the hedges, half covering the milestones which told us the distance from large cities. Quaint hamlets with strange-looking inns with queer sign-boards; small cottages, overrun with red roses; jolly waggoners with their splendid-looking teams, carrying sacks of flour; the voices of the

harvesters, as they bound up their sheaves of ripened corn; tiny meres, with groups of bulrushes and waterlilies on their surface; the sun glorious above, shedding its beneficent rays upon the fields and gardens below; orchards with shining apples dangling from many a bough; and many a homestead, heavy with pears around its gables; thick spinneys and brambled shrubberies peopled with much game, peeped out as we wended our way along.

We stopped at Hoole, and visited the old church, which contains a three-decker pulpit, from which Jeremiah Horrocks, the famous astronomer, discoverer of the transit of Venus, and the compiler of our tidal system, preached his sermons. A little farther on, with our backs resting against a flowering bank, we took our last out-of-door luncheon. We spoke of geniuses and inventors, and agreed that Lancashire and Yorkshire had given more than their share of useful inventions to the world.

I told E. S. how in the previous summer I had rested on a gravestone in a small village churchyard in Yorkshire, and how, noticing the impression of a lighthouse on the headstone, I read its inscription, and found that it was the simple grave of the great engineer, Smeaton, whose genius and method of dove-tailing masonry had given to the world lighthouses upon which our sailors could depend.

We quoted Grey's Elegy, and agreed with the poet that genius was often buried through lack of opportunity.

We continued our walk through delightful country, passing hamlets and villages which bespoke their Huguenot origin; old churches with stocks for the unruly ones alongside their walls; passed through hedges and over stiles,

from where we could see distant beacons, whose tops had given their fiery message to the Northmen when the Spanish Armada threatened our shores ; over velvety turf, until at last we came to the end of our journey.

The sea was a steely blue, with silver flecks to the north, as a faint breeze scurried and divided the waves. On the horizon a great red sun was dancing on the water. Above there was a multitudinous glow of crimson, higher, a cloud of electric blue, and higher in the heavens a great mass of gold, glowing and giving its reflections to thousands of tiny wavelets as they broke on the shore. Truly nature was hanging out her banners, and everything appeared "arrayed in celestial glory."

Small wonder that Turner came here to paint his skies, and as we looked at it, and at the distant sea beyond, we felt a little of the joy felt by Pizarro, who, after journeying across the Panama Belt, obtained his first glimpse of the great Pacific Waters.

THE END

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